

THE  
WORKS  
OF  
Dr. EDWARD YOUNG.

VOL. III.

W O R K S

EDWARD YOUNG.



THE  
WORKS  
OF THE REVEREND  
Dr. EDWARD YOUNG.  
IN  
SIX VOLUMES.

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Carefully Compared and Corrected by the Author's Edition.

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VOLUME the THIRD.

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Prof. Kenneth B. Murdock

THE  
COMPLAINT:

OR,  
NIGHT-THOUGHTS  
ON  
LIFE, DEATH,  
AND  
IMMORTALITY.

*Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.*

VIRG.

VOL. III.

A

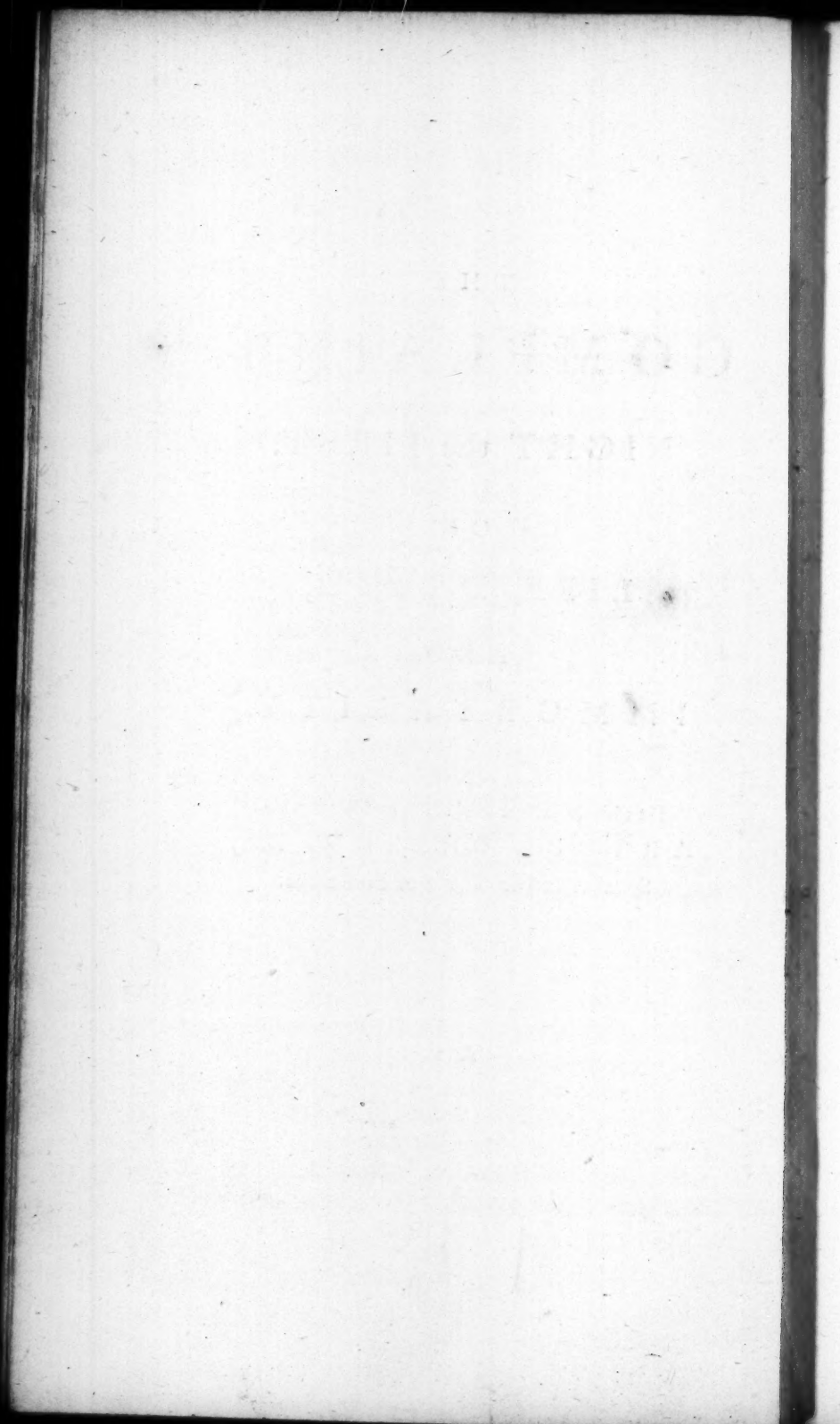
## P R E F A C E.

As the occasion of this Poem was real, not fictitious; so the method pursued in it was rather imposed, by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed; which will appear very probable from the nature of it: for it differs from the common mode of Poetry; which is, from long narrations to draw short morals. Here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is, That the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.

THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT the FIRST.

ON  
LIFE, DEATH,  
AND  
IMMORTALITY.

Humbly inscribed to the Right Honourable  
ARTHUR ONSLOW, Esq.,  
Speaker of the House of Commons.





## NIGHT the FIRST.

**T**IR'D Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!  
 He, like the world, his ready visit pays  
 Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes;  
 Swift on his downy pinion flies from wo,  
 And lights on lids unfully'd with a tear.

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose,  
 I wake: how happy they who wake no more!  
 Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.  
 I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams  
 Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding thought  
 From wave to wave of fancy'd misery  
 At random drove, her helm of reason lost:  
 Tho' now restor'd, 'tis only change of pain,  
 (A bitter change!) severer for severe:  
 The day too short, for my distress! and Night,  
 Even in the zenith of her dark domain,  
 Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,  
 In rayless majesty, now stretches forth  
 Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumb'ring world.  
 Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound!  
 Nor eye, nor list'ning ear, an object finds:  
 Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the general pulse  
 Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause;  
 An awful pause! prophetic of her end.  
 And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd:  
 Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

Silence, and Darkness! solemn sisters! twins  
 From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought  
 To reason, and on reason build resolve,  
 (That column of true majesty in man),  
 Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;  
 The grave, your kingdom: there this frame shall fall



6 THE COMPLAINT:

A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.

But what are ye?—

THOU, who didst put to flight

Primæval silence, when the morning-stars,

Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;

O THOU! whose word from solid darkness struck

That spark, the sun; strike wisdom from my soul;

My soul which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,

As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Thro' this opaque of nature, and of soul,

This double night, transmit one pitying ray,

To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind,

(A mind that fain would wander from its wo),

Lead it thro' various scenes of life and death;

And from each scene the noblest truths inspire.

Nor less inspire my conduct, than my song;

Teach my best reason, reason; my best will,

Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolves

Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear.

Nor let the vial of thy vengeance; pour'd

On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

The bell strikes One. We take no note of time,

But from its loss. To give it then a tongue,

Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,

I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,

It is the knell of my departed hours.

Where are they? With the years beyond the flood.

It is the signal that demands dispatch:

How much is to be done? My hopes and fears

Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge

Look down—on what? a fathomless abyss;

A dread eternity! how surely mine!

And can eternity belong to me,

Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour?

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,

How complicate, how wonderful, is man!

How passing wonder He, who made him such!

Who center'd in our make such strange extremes!

From different natures marvelously mixt,  
Connection exquisite of distant worlds!  
Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain!  
Midway from nothing to the Deity!  
A beam etherial, fully'd, and absorpt!  
Tho' fully'd, and dishonour'd, still divine!  
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!  
An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!  
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!  
A worm!—a god!—I tremble at myself,  
And in myself am lost! at home a stranger,  
Thought wanders up and down, surpris'd, aghast,  
And wond'ring at her own: how reason reels!  
O what a miracle to man is man,  
Triumphantly distress'd! what joy, what dread!  
Alternately transported, and alarm'd!  
What can preserve my life? or what destroy?  
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave:  
Legions of angels can't confine me there.  
'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof:  
While o'er my limbs sleep's soft dominion spread,  
What tho' my soul phantastic measures trod  
O'er fairy fields; or mourn'd along the gloom  
Of pathless woods; or, down the craggy steep  
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool;  
Or scal'd the cliff; or danc'd on hollow winds,  
With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain?  
Her ceaseless flight, tho' devious, speaks her nature  
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod:  
Active, aerial, tow'ring, unconfin'd,  
Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.  
Ev'n silent Night proclaims my soul immortal:  
Ev'n silent Night proclaims eternal day:  
For human weal Heav'n husbands all events;  
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.  
Why then their loss deplore that are not lost?  
Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around,  
In infidel distress? Are angels there?

8 THE COMPLAINT:

Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, etherial fire?  
 They live! they greatly live a life on earth  
 Unkindled, unconceiv'd; and from an eye  
 Of tenderness, let heav'nly pity fall  
 On me, more justly number'd with the dead.  
 This is the desert, this the solitude:  
 How populous, how vital, is the grave!  
 This is creation's melancholy vault,  
 The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom;  
 The land of apparitions, empty shades!  
 All, all, on earth is shadow; all beyond,  
 Is substance: the reverse is folly's creed:  
 How solid all, where change shall be no more!

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,  
 The twilight of our day, the vestibule:  
 Life's theatre as yet is shut; and death,  
 Strong death alone can heave the massy bar,  
 This gross impediment of clay remove,  
 And make us embryos of existence free.  
 From real life, but little more remote  
 Is He, not yet a candidate for light,  
 The future embryo, slumb'ring in his fire.  
 Embryos we must be, till we burst the shell,  
 Yon ambient, azure shell, and spring to life;  
 The life of gods, O transport! and of man.

Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thought;  
 Inters celestial hopes without one sigh:  
 Pris'ner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,  
 Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by Heav'n  
 To fly at infinite; and reach it there,  
 Where Seraphs gather immortality,  
 On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God:  
 What golden joys ambrosial clust'ring glow  
 In his full beam, and ripen for the just,  
 Where momentary ages are no more;  
 Where Time and Pain, and Chance and Death, expire!  
 And is it in the flight of threescore years,  
 To push eternity from human thought,

## NIGHT THE FIRST.

And smother souls immortal in the dust?  
 A soul immortal spending all her fires,  
 Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,  
 Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,  
 At aught this scene can threaten, or indulge,  
 Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,  
 To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure? It o'erwhelms myself.  
 How was my heart encrusted by the world!  
 O how self-fetter'd was my grov'ling soul!  
 How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round  
 In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,  
 Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er  
 With soft conceit of endless comfort here,  
 Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!

Night-visions may befriend, (as sung above):  
 Our waking-dreams are fatal. How I dreamt  
 Of things impossible! (could sleep do more?)  
 Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!  
 Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave!  
 Eternal sunshine in the storms of life!  
 How richly were my noon-tide trances hung  
 With gorgeous tapestries of pictured joys!  
 Joy behind joy, in endless perspective!  
 Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue  
 Calls daily for his millions at a meal,  
 Starting I woke, and found myself undone.  
 Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture?  
 The cobweb'd cottage with its ragged wall  
 Of mould'ring mud, is royalty to me!  
 The spider's most attenuated thread  
 Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie  
 On earthly bliss; it breaks at every breeze.

O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!  
 Full, above measure! lasting, beyond bound!  
 A perpetuity of bliss, is bliss.  
 Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,  
 That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,

10 THE COMPLAINT:

And quite unparadise the realms of light.  
 Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres,  
 The baleful influence of whose giddy dance  
 Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.  
 Here teems with revolutions ev'ry hour;  
 And rarely for the better; or the best,  
 More mortal than the common births of fate.  
 Each Moment has its sickle, emulous  
 Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep  
 Strikes empires from the root; each Moment plays  
 His little weapon in the narrower sphere  
 Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down  
 The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain:  
 Implicit treason to divine decree!

A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven!  
 I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.  
 O had I weigh'd it e'er my fond embrace,  
 What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!

Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine  
 To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.  
 The sun himself by thy permission shines,  
 And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.  
 Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust  
 Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?  
 Why thy peculiar rancour wreck'd on me?  
 Infatiate archer! could not one suffice?  
 Thy shaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was slain;  
 And thrice, e'er thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.  
 O Cynthia! why so pale? Dost thou lament  
 Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel  
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?  
 How wanes my borrow'd bliss! From Fortune's smile,  
 Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,  
 Self-given, solar, ray of sound delight.

In every vary'd posture, place, and hour,  
 How widow'd every thought of every joy!  
 Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!



Thro' the dark postern of Time long elaps'd,  
Led softly, by the stillness of the night,  
Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)  
Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;  
In quest of wretchedness perversely strays;  
And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts  
Of my departed joys, a numerous train!  
I rue the riches of my former fate;  
Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament;  
I tremble at the blessings once so dear;  
And every pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why complain? or why complain for one?  
Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,  
The single man? are angels all beside?  
I mourn for millions: 'tis the common lot;  
In this shape, or in that, has Fate entail'd  
The mother's throes on all of woman born,  
Not more the children, than sure heirs of pain.

War, famine, pest, vulcano, storm, and fire,  
Intestine broils, Oppression with her heart  
Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind:  
God's image, disinherited of day,  
Here plung'd in mines, forgets a sun was made;  
There beings, deathless as their haughty lord,  
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life;  
And plow the winter's wave, and reap despair:  
Some, for hard masters, broken under arms,  
In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,  
Beg bitter bread thro' realms their valour sav'd,  
If so the tyrant, or his minion, doom:  
Want, and incurable Disease, (fell pair!)  
On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize  
At once; and make a refuge of the grave:  
How groaning hospitals eject their dead!  
What numbers groan for sad admission there!  
What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,  
Solicit the cold hand of charity!  
To shock us more, solicit it in vain!

32 THE COMPLAINT:

Ye filken fons of pleasure! since in pains  
You rue more modish visits, visit here,  
And breathe from your debauch: give, and reduce  
Surfeit's dominion o'er you: but so great  
Our impudence, you blush at what's right!

Happy! did sorrow seize on such alone.  
Nor prudence can defend, nor virtue save;  
Disease invades the chastest temperance,  
And punishment the guiltless, and alarm  
Thro' thickest shades pursues the fond of peace.  
Man's caution often into danger turns,  
And his guard falling, crushes him to death.  
Not happiness itself makes good her name;  
Our very wishes give us not our wish.  
How distant oft the thing we doat on most,  
From that for which we doat, felicity!  
The smoothest course of nature has its pains;  
And truest friends, thro' error, wound our rest:  
Without misfortune, what calamities!  
And what hostilities, without a foe!  
Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth!  
But endless is the list of human ills,  
And sighs might sooner fail, than cause to sigh.

A part how small of the terraqueous globe  
Is tenanted by man! the rest a waste,  
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands;  
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and leath.  
Such is earth's melancholy map! But, far  
More sad! this earth is a true map of man:  
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights  
To Wo's wide empire! where deep troubles toss,  
Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,  
Rav'nous calamities our vitals seize,  
And threat'ning Fate wide opens to devour.

What then am I, who sorrow for myself?  
In age, in infancy, from others aid  
Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind.  
That, nature's first, last lesson to mankind:



NIGHT THE FIRST. 13

The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels;  
 More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts,  
 And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.  
 Nor virtue, more than prudence, bids me give  
 Swoln thought a second channel; who divide,  
 They weaken too, the torrent of their grief.  
 Take then, O world! thy much-indebted tear:  
 How sad a sight is human happiness  
 To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!  
 O thou! whate'er thou art, whose heart exults!  
 Would'st thou I should congratulate thy fate?  
 I know thou would'st; thy pride demands it from me.  
 Let thy pride pardon, what thy nature needs,  
 The salutary censure of a friend.  
 Thou happy wretch! by blindness art thou blest'd;  
 By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles.  
 Know, smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;  
 Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.  
 Misfortune, like a creditor severe,  
 But rises in demand for her delay;  
 She makes a scourge of past prosperity,  
 To sting thee more, and double thy distress.  
 Lorenzo, fortune makes her court to thee;  
 Thy fond heart dances, while the Syren sings.  
 Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;  
 I would not damp, but to secure, thy joys.  
 Think not that fear is sacred to the storm:  
 Stand on thy guard against the smiles of fate.  
 Is Heav'n tremendous in its frowns? Most sure;  
 And in its favours formidable too:  
 Its favours here are trials, not rewards;  
 A call to duty, not discharge from care;  
 And should alarm us full as much as woes;  
 Awake us to their cause, and consequence;  
 And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert;  
 Awe nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,  
 Lest while we clasp, we kill them; nay invite  
 To worse than simple misery, their charms.

Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,  
 Like bosom friendships to resentment four'd,  
 With rage envenom'd rise against our peace.  
 Beware what earth calls happiness ; beware  
 All joys, but joys that never can expire ;  
 Who builds on less than an immortal base,  
 Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine dy'd with thee, Philander! thy last sigh  
 Dissolv'd the charm ; the disinherited earth  
 Lost all her lustre. Where her glitt'ring tow'rs?  
 Her golden mountains, where? All darken'd down  
 To naked waste ; a dreary vale of tears :  
 The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece  
 Of out-cast earth, in darkness ! what a change  
 From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,  
 (Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd  
 Thy glowing cheek! ambition truly great,  
 Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle seed within,  
 (Sly, treacherous miner!) working in the dark,  
 Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd  
 The worm to riot on that rose so red,  
 Unfaded e'er it fell ; one moment's prey!

Man's foresight is conditionally wise ;  
 Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns,  
 Oft the first instant, it idea fair  
 To lab'ring thought is born: How dim our eye!  
 The present moment terminates our sight ;  
 Clouds, thick as those on doomsday, drown the next;  
 We penetrate, we prophecy in vain.  
 Time is dealt out by particles ; and each,  
 E'er mingled by the streaming sands of life,  
 By fate's inviolable oath is sworn  
 Deep silence, " Where eternity begins."

By Nature's law, what may be, may be now ;  
 There's no prerogative in human hours.  
 In human hearts what bolder thoughts can rise,  
 Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?  
 Where is to-morrow? In another world.

For numbers this is certain ; the reverse  
Is sure to none : and yet on this perhaps,  
This peradventure, infamous for lies,  
As on a rock of adamant, we build  
Our mountain hopes ; spin out eternal schemes,  
As we the fatal filsters cou'd outspin,  
And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not ev'n Philander had bespoke his shroud :  
Nor had he cause ; a warning was deny'd.  
How many fall as sudden, not as safe !  
As sudden, tho' for years admonish'd home !  
Of human ills the last extreme beware,  
Beware, Lorenzo ! a slow-sudden death.  
How dreadful that deliberate surprise !  
Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer ;  
Next day the fatal precedent will plead ;  
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.  
Procrastination is the thief of time ;  
Year after year it steals, till all are fled ;  
And to the mercies of a moment leaves  
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.  
If not so frequent, would not this be strange ?  
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears  
The palm, " That all men are about to live,"  
For ever on the brink of being born.  
All pay themselves the compliment, to think  
They, one day, shall not drivel : and their pride  
On this reversion takes up ready praise ;  
At least, their own ; their future selves applauds :  
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead !  
Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails ;  
That lodg'd in Fate's, to Wisdom they consign ;  
The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone :  
'Tis not in folly, not to scorn a fool ;  
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.  
All promise is poor dilatory man,  
And that through every stage : when young, indeed,

In full content we sometimes nobly rest,  
 Unanxious for ourselves; and only wish,  
 As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.  
 At thirty, man suspects himself a fool;  
 Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;  
 At fifty, chides his infamous delay,  
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;  
 In all the magnanimity of thought  
 Resolves, and re-resolves; then dies the same.

And why? Because he thinks himself immortal.  
 All men think all men mortal but themselves;  
 Themselves, when some alarming shock of fate  
 Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the sudden dread;  
 But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,  
 Soon close; where past the shaft no trace is found:  
 As from the wing no scar the sky retains;  
 The parted wave no furrow from the keel;  
 So dies in human hearts the thoughts of death:  
 Even with the tender tear which nature sheds  
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.  
 Can I forget Philander? That were strange!  
 O my full heart——But should I give it vent,  
 The longest night, tho' longer far, would fail,  
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.

The spritely lark's shrill matin wakes the morn:  
 Grief's sharpest thorn hard-pressing on my breast,  
 I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer  
 The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,  
 And call the stars to listen: every star  
 Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.  
 Yet be not vain; there are who thine excell,  
 And charm thro' distant ages: wrapt in shade,  
 Pris'ner of darkness! to the silent hours  
 How often I repeat their rage divine,  
 To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from wo!  
 I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.  
 Dark, tho' not blind, like thee, Mæonides!  
 Or, Milton! thee; ah cou'd I reach your strain!

Or his, who made Mæonides our own.  
Man too he sung: immortal man I sing:  
Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life;  
What, now, but immortality can please?  
O had he press'd his theme, pursu'd the track  
Which opens out of darkness into day!  
O had he mounted on his wing of fire,  
Soar'd where I sink, and sung immortal man!  
How had it bless'd mankind, and rescu'd me!

THE FIRST PART

OF THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF LONDON  
FROM THE FIRST  
SETTLING OF THE  
CITY TO THE  
PRESENT TIME  
BY  
JOHN STOW  
1618

Printed by I. I. for I. I.

At the Signe of the Gunne

in the Strand

1618

THE SECOND PART

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THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT the SECOND.  
ON  
TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP.

Humbly inscribed to the Right Honourable  
The Earl of WILMINGTON.



COMPILATION  
OF THE  
LAW

OF THE  
STATE OF  
NEW YORK

## NIGHT the SECOND.

" **W** H E N the cock crew, he wept,"—smote by  
that eye,

Which looks on me, on all : that pow'r, who bids  
This midnight centinel with clarion shrill,  
Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,  
Rouze souls from slumber into thoughts of heaven.  
Shall I too weep ? Where then is fortitude ?  
And fortitude abandon'd, where is man ?  
I know the terms on which he sees the light :  
He that is born, is lifted : life is war,  
Eternal war with wo : who bears it best,  
Deserves it least.—On other themes I'll dwell.  
Lorenzo ! let me turn my thoughts on thee,  
And thine on themes may profit ; profit there,  
Where most thy need : Themes too, the genuine  
growth

Of dear Philander's dust : He thus, tho' dead,  
May still befriend.—What themes ? Times won-  
drous price ;

Death ; Friendship ; and Philander's final scene.

So could I touch these themes, as might obtain  
Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengag'd,  
The good deed would delight me ; half impress  
On my dark cloud an Iris ; and from grief  
Call glory.—Dost thou mourn Philander's fate ?  
I know thou say'st it : says thy life the same ?  
He mourns the dead, who lives as they desire.  
Where is that thirst, that avarice of TIME,  
(O glorious avarice ! ) thought of death inspires,  
As rumour'd robberies endear our gold ?  
O time ! than gold more sacred ; more a load  
Than lead, to fools ; and fool's reputed wise.  
What moment's granted man without account ?

What years are squander'd, Wisdom's debt unpaid?  
 Our wealth in days, all due to that discharge.  
 Haste, haste, he lyes in wait, he's at the door,  
 Insidious death! should his strong hand arrest,  
 No composition sets the pris'ner free:  
 Eternity's inexorable chain

Fast binds; and Vengeance claims the full arrear.

How late I shudder'd on the brink! how late  
 Life call'd for her last refuge in despair!  
 That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe:  
 Fain would I pay thee with eternity:  
 But ill my genius answers my desire;  
 My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.  
 Accept the will;—that dies not with my strain.

For what calls thy disease, Lorenzo? Not  
 For Esculapian, but for moral, aid.  
 Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.  
 Youth is not rich in time; it may be poor:  
 Part with it as with money, sparing; pay  
 No moment, but in purchase of its worth:  
 And what its worth, ask deathbeds; they can tell.  
 Part with it as with life, reluctant; big  
 With holy hope of nobler time to come;  
 Time higher-aim'd, still nearer the great mark  
 Of men and angels; virtue more divine.

Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?  
 (These Heav'n benign in vital union binds),  
 And sport we like the natives of the bough,  
 When vernal suns inspire? Amusement reigns—  
 Man's great demand: to trifle is to live:  
 And is it then a trifle, too, to die?

Thou say'st I preach, Lorenzo! 'Tis confess'd.  
 What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?  
 Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?  
 Is it not treason to the soul immortal,  
 Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?  
 Will toys amuse, when med'cine cannot cure?  
 When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes

NIGHT THE SECOND. 23

Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,  
 (As lands, and cities with their glitt'ring spires,  
 To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm  
 Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there?)  
 Will toys amuse?—No: thrones will then be toys,  
 And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

Redeem we time?—Its loss we dearly buy.  
 What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports?  
 He pleads time's numerous blanks; he loudly pleads  
 The straw-like trifles on life's common stream.  
 From whom those blanks and trifles, but from thee?  
 No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant.  
 Virtue, or pupos'd virtue, still be thine:  
 This cancels thy complaint at once: this leaves  
 In act no trifle, and no blank in time:  
 This greatens, fills, immortalizes all:  
 This, the bless'd art of turning all to gold:  
 This, the good heart's prerogative to raise  
 A royal tribute from the poorest hours;  
 Immense revenue! every moment pays.  
 If nothing more than purpose in thy pow'r,  
 Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed:  
 Who does the best his circumstance allows,  
 Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.  
 Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint;  
 'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer:  
 Guard well thy thought; our thoughts are heard in  
 heaven.

On all-important time, through every age,  
 Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd; the man  
 Is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour.  
 "I've lost a day,"—the Prince who nobly cry'd,  
 Had been an emperor without his crown;  
 Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race;  
 He spoke, as if deputed by mankind:  
 So should all speak; so Reason speaks in all.  
 From the soft whispers of that god in man,  
 Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,

For rescue from the blessings we possess?  
 Time, the supreme!—Time is eternity;  
 Pregnant with all eternity can give;  
 Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile;  
 Who murders time, he crushes in the birth  
 A pow'r ethereal, only not ador'd.

Ah! how unjust to nature, and himself,  
 Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!  
 Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,  
 We censure Nature for a span too short;  
 That span too short, we tax as tedious too;  
 Torture invention, all expedients tire,  
 To lash the lingering moments into speed,  
 And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.  
 Art, brainless Art! our furious charioteer,  
 (For Nature's voice unstifled would recall)  
 Drives headlong tow'rd the precipice of Death;  
 Death, most our dread; Death, thus more dreadful  
 O what a riddle of absurdity! [made.  
 Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot-wheels:  
 How heavily we drag the load of life!  
 Blest'd leisure is our curse: like that of Cain,  
 It makes us wander; wander earth around  
 To fly that tyrant, Thought. As Atlas groan'd  
 The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour.  
 We cry for mercy to the next amusement;  
 The next amusement mortgages our fields;  
 Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,  
 From hateful Time if prisons set us free.  
 Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief,  
 We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,  
 Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd:  
 To man's false optics (from his folly false)  
 Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,  
 And seems to creep decrepit with his age:  
 Behold him, when past by; what then is seen,  
 But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?  
 And all mankind, in contradiction strong,

NIGHT THE SECOND. 45

Rueful, aghast! cry out at his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors, and these ills;  
To Nature just, their cause and cure explore.  
Not short Heav'n's bounty, boundless our expence;  
No niggard, Nature; men are prodigals.  
We waste, not use, our time: we breathe, not live;  
Time wasted, is existence; us'd, is life:  
And bare existence, man, to live ordain'd,  
Wrings, and oppresses with enormous weight.  
And why? since Time was given for use, not waste;  
Enjoin'd to fly; with tempest, tide, and stars,  
To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man;  
Time's use was doom'd a pleasure; waste a pain;  
That man might feel his error, if unseen;  
And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure:  
Not, blund'ring, split on idleness, for ease.  
Life's cares are comforts; such by Heav'n design'd;  
He that has none, must make them, or be wretched.  
Cares are employments; and without employ  
The soul is on a rack; the rack of rest,  
To souls most adverse; action all their joy.

Here, then, the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds;  
Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.  
We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan;  
We thwart the Deity! and 'tis decreed,  
Who thwart his will, shall contradict their own.  
Hence our unnat'ral quarrel with ourselves;  
Our thoughts at enmity; our bosom-broil;  
We push Time from us, and we wish him back;  
Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life:  
Life we think long, and short; Death seek, and shun;  
Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,  
United jar, and yet are loth are part.

On the dark days of vanity! while here,  
How tasteless! and how terrible, when gone!  
Gone! they ne'er go; when past, they haunt us still;  
The spirit walks of ev'ry day deceas'd,  
And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.



Nor death, nor life, delights us. If time past,  
 And time possess'd, both pains us, what can please?  
 That which the Deity to please ordain'd,  
 Time us'd. The man who consecrates his hours  
 By vig'rous effort, and an honest aim,  
 At once he draws the sting of life and death:  
 He walks with nature; and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause and cure are seen: see next  
 Time's nature, origin, importance, speed:  
 And thy great gain from urging his career.—  
 All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,  
 He looks on Time as nothing. Nothing else  
 Is truly man's; 'tis Fortune's—Time's a god.  
 Hast thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence?  
 For, or against, what wonders can he do!  
 And will: to stand blank neuter he disdains.  
 Not on those terms was time-(Heav'n's stranger!) sent  
 On his important embassy to man.

Lorenzo! no: on the long-destin'd hour,  
 From everlasting ages growing ripe,  
 That memorable hour of wondrous birth,  
 When the DREAD SIRE, on emanation bent,  
 And big with nature, rising in his might,  
 Call'd forth creation, (for then Time was born)  
 By Godhead streaming thro' a thousand worlds:  
 Not on those terms, from the great days of Heav'n,  
 From old Eternity's mysterious orb,  
 Was Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies;  
 The skies, which watch him in his new abode,  
 Meas'ring his motions by revolving spheres:  
 That horologe machinery divine.  
 Hours, days, and months, and years, his children, play,  
 Like numerous wings, around him, as he flies:  
 Or, rather, as unequal plumes, they shape  
 His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,  
 To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,  
 And join anew Eternity his fire;  
 In his immutability to nest,



NIGHT THE SECOND. 27

When worlds, that count his circles now, unhing'd,  
(Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush  
To timeless night, and chaos, whence they rose.

Why spur the speedy? why with levities  
New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight?  
Know'st thou, or what thou dost, or what is done?  
Man flies from Time, and Time from man: too soon  
In sad divorce this double flight must end:  
And then, where are we? where, Lorenzo! then,  
Thy sports? thy pomps?—I grant thee, in a state  
Not unambitious; in the ruffled shroud,  
Thy Parian's tomb's triumphant arch beneath.  
Has Death his fopperies? then well may Life  
Put on her plumie, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well-array'd! ye lilies of our land!  
Ye lilies male! who neither toil nor spin,  
(As sister lilies might), if not so wise  
As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!  
Ye delicate! who nothing can support,  
Yourself most insupportable! for whom  
The winter-rose must blow, the sun put on  
A brighter beam in Leo; silky-soft  
Favonius breathe still softer, or be chid;  
And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,  
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign-looks!  
O ye Lorenzo's of our age! who deem  
One moment unamused, a misery  
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud  
For every bawble driv'd o'er by sense,  
For rattles and conceits of every cast,  
For change of follies, and relays of joy,  
To drag your patient through the tedious length  
Of a short winter's day;—say, fages! say,  
Wit's oracles! say, dreamers of gay dreams!  
How will you weather an eternal night,  
Where such expedients fail?

O treach'rous Conscience! while she seems sleep  
On rose and myrtle, lull'd with syren song;

While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop  
 On headlong appetite the slacken'd rein,  
 And give us up to licence, unrecall'd,  
 Unmark'd;—see, from behind her secret stand,  
 The fly informer minutes every fault,  
 And her dread diary with horror fills:  
 Not the gross act alone employs her pen;  
 She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band,  
 A watchful foe! the formidable spy,  
 Lift'ning o'erhears the whispers of our camp;  
 Our dawning purposes of heart explores,  
 And steals our embryos of iniquity.  
 As all-rapacious usurers conceal  
 Their doomday-book, from all-consuming heirs;  
 Thus with indulgence most severe, she treats  
 Us spendthrifts of inestimable Time;  
 Unnoted, notes each moment misapply'd;  
 In leaves more durable than leaves of brass,  
 Writes our whole history; which Death shall read  
 In every pale delinquent's private ear;  
 And judgment publish; publish to more worlds  
 Than this; and endless age in groans resound.  
 Lorenzo, such that sleeper in thy breast!  
 Such is her slumber; and her vengeance such,  
 For slighted counsel; such thy future peace!  
 And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon?

But why on Time so lavish is my song?  
 On this great theme kind Nature keeps a school,  
 To teach her sons herself. Each night we die,  
 Each morn are born anew; each day, a life!  
 And shall we kill each day? if trifling kills,  
 Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain  
 Cry out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd  
 Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.  
 Time flies, Death urges, knells call, Heaven invites,  
 Hell threatens: All exerts; in effort, all;  
 More than creation labours!—Labours more?  
 And is there in creation, what, amidst

NIGHT THE SECOND. 29

This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,  
And ardent energy, supinely yawns?—  
Man sleeps; and man alone; and man, whose fate,  
Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,  
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulph  
A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom  
All else is in alarm; man, the sole cause  
Of this surrounding storm! and yet he sleeps,  
As the storm rock'd to rest.—Throw years away?  
Throw empires, and be blameless. Moments seize;  
Heav'n's on their wing: a moment we may wish,  
When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid day stand still;  
Bid him drive back his car, and reimport  
The period past, regive the given hour.  
Lorenzo, more than miracles we want;  
Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come!

Such is the language of the man awake;  
His ardor such, for what oppresses thee.  
And is his ardor vain, Lorenzo? No;  
That more than miracle the gods indulge;  
To-day is yesterday return'd; return'd  
Full-pow'r'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,  
And reinstate us on the rock of peace.  
Let it not share its predecessor's fate;  
Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool.  
Shall it evaporate in fume? fly off  
Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?  
Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?  
More wretched for the clemencies of Heav'n?

Where shall I find him? Angels, tell me where?  
You know him; he is near you: point him out:  
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow?  
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flow'rs?  
Your golden wings, now hov'ring o'er him, shed  
Protection; now, are waving in applause  
To that bless'd son of foresight! lord of fate!  
That awful independent on to-morrow!  
Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;

30 THE COMPLAINT:

Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile;  
 Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly;  
 That common, but opprobrious lot! past hours,  
 If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,  
 If Folly bounds our prospect by the grave,  
 All feeling of futurity benumb'd;  
 All godlike passion for eternals quench'd;  
 All relish of realities expir'd;  
 Renounc'd all correspondence with the skies;  
 Our freedom chain'd; quite wingleſs our deſire;  
 In ſenſe dark-prison'd all that ought to ſoar;  
 Prone to the centre; crawling in the duſt;  
 Diſmounted every great and glorious aim;  
 Embruted every faculty divine;  
 Heart-buried in the rubbiſh of the world;  
 The world, that gulph of ſouls, immortal ſouls,  
 Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire  
 To reach the diſtant ſkies, and triumph there  
 On thrones, which ſhall not mourn their maſters  
 chang'd;

Tho' we from earth; etherial, they that fell.  
 Such veneration due, O man, to man!

Who venerate themſelves, the world deſpiſe.  
 For what, gay friend! is this eſcutcheon'd world,  
 Which hangs out DEATH in one eternal night?  
 A night, that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,  
 And wraps our thoughts, at banquets, in the ſhroud.  
 Life's little ſtage is a ſmall eminence,  
 Inch-high the grave above; that home of man,  
 Where dwells the multitude: we gaze around,  
 We read their monuments; we ſigh; and while  
 We ſigh, we ſink, and are what we deplor'd;  
 Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot!

Is death at diſtance? No: he has been on thee;  
 And given ſure earneſt of his final blow.  
 Thoſe hours that lately ſmil'd, where are they now?  
 Pallid to thought, and ghafly! drown'd, all drown'd  
 In that great deep, which nothing diſcembogues;

# NIGHT THE SECOND. 31

And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.  
The rest are on the wing; how fleet their flight!  
Already has the fatal train took fire;  
A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;  
The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours;  
And ask them, what report they bore to Heaven;  
And how they might have borne more welcome news.  
Their answers form what men experience call;  
If Wisdom's friend, her best; if not, worst foe.  
O reconcile them; kind experience cries,  
"There's nothing here, but what as nothing weighs;  
"The more our joy, the more we know it vain;  
"And by success are tutor'd to despair."

Nor is it only thus, but must be so.  
Who knows not this, tho' grey, is still a child.  
Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,  
Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou canst not disengage,  
Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes?  
Since, by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,  
Light, as the summer's dust, we take in air  
A moment's giddy flight, and fall again;  
Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,  
And sleep till earth herself shall be no more;  
Since then (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown)  
We, fore amaz'd, from out earth's ruins crawl,  
And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,  
As man's own choice, (controuler of the skies!)  
As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour,  
(O how omnipotent is time!) decrees;  
Should not each warning give a strong alarm?  
Warning, far less than that of bosom torn  
From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead!  
Should not each dial strike us as we pass,  
Portentous, as the written wall, which struck,  
O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,  
Ere-while high-flush'd with insolence and wine?



Like that, the dial speaks; and points to thee,  
Lorenzo! loth to break the banquet up:

"O man, thy kingdom is departing from thee;

"And, while it lasts, is emptier than my shade."

Its silent language such: nor need'st thou call

Thy Magi, to decypher what it means.

Know, like the Midian, fate is in thy walls:

Dost ask, how? whence? Belshazzar-like, amaz'd?

Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death;

Life feeds the murderer: ingrate! he thrives

On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But, here, Lorenzo, the delusion lyes;

That solar shadow, as it measures life,

It life resembles too: life speeds away

From point to point, tho' seeming to stand still.

The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth:

Too subtle is the movement to be seen:

Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.

Warnings point out our danger; gnomons, time:

As these are useless when the sun is set;

So those, but when more glorious reason shines.

Reason should judge in all; in reason's eye,

That sedentary shadow travels hards.

But such our gravitation to the wrong,

So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,

'Tis later with the wise than he's aware;

A Wilmington goes slower than the sun;

And all mankind mistake their time of day;

Ev'n age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown

In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's descent,

We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.

We take fair days in winter for the spring;

And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft

Man must compute that age he cannot feel,

He scarce believes he's older for his years.

Thus, at life's latest eve, we keep in store

One disappointment sure to crown the rest,

The disappointment of a promis'd hour.



# NIGHT THE SECOND. 33

On this, or similar, Philander! thou  
 Whose mind was moral, as the preacher's tongue;  
 And strong, to wield all science, worth the name;  
 How often we talk'd down the summer's sun,  
 And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream!  
 How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve,  
 By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth,  
 Best found, so fought; to the recluse more coy!  
 Thoughts disentangle passing o'er the lip;  
 Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,  
 Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song;  
 Song, fashionably fruitless; such as stains  
 The fancy, and unhallo'd passion fires;  
 Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane.

Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?  
 As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flow'rs,  
 So men from FRIENDSHIP, wisdom and delight:  
 Twins ty'd by nature; if they part, they die.  
 Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad?  
 Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up, want air,  
 And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.  
 Had thought been all, sweet speech had been deny'd;  
 Speech, thought's canal; speech, thought's criterion too!  
 Thought in the mine, may come forth gold or dross;  
 When coin'd in word, we know its real worth.  
 If sterling, store it for thy future use;  
 'Twill buy thee benefit; perhaps, renown.  
 Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd;  
 Teaching, we learn; and, giving, we retain  
 The births of intellect; when dumb, forgot.  
 Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;  
 Speech burnishes our mental magazine;  
 Brightens, for ornament; and whets, for use.  
 What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, ly,  
 Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,  
 And rusted in; who might have borne an edge,  
 And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech;  
 If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue?

'Tis thought's exchange, which like th' alternate push  
Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,  
And defecates the student's standing pool.

In contemplation is his proud resource?

'Tis poor, as proud, by converse unsustain'd.

Rude thought runs wild in contemplation's field;

Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit

Of due restraint; and emulation's spur

Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.

'Tis converse qualifies for solitude;

As exercise, for salutary rest.

By that untutor'd, contemplation raves;

And nature's fool, by wisdom is undone.

Wisdom, though richer than Peruvian mines,

And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,

What is she but the means of happiness?

That unobtain'd, than folly more a fool;

A melancholy fool, without her bells.

Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives

The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.

Nature, in zeal for human amity,

Denies or damps an undivided joy.

Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;

Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two:

Rich fruit! heav'n-planted! never pluck'd by one.

Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give

To social man true relish of himself.

Pull on ourselves descending in a line

Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight:

Delight intense is taken by rebound:

Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial happiness, whene'er she stoops

To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,

And one alone, to make her sweet amends

For absent heav'n—the bosom of a friend;

Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,

Each other's pillow to repose divine.

Beware the counterfeit: in Passion's flame

NIGHT THE SECOND. 35

Hearts melt; but melt like ice, soon harder froze,

True love strikes root in Reason; Passion's foe:

Virtue alone entenders us for life;

I wrong her much—entenders us for ever.

Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair,

Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,

And, emulously, rapid in her race.

O the soft enmity! endearing strife!

This carries friendship to her noon-tide point,

And gives the rivet of eternity.

From friendship, which outlives my former themes,

Glorious survivor of old Time and Death!

From friendship, thus, that flow'r of heavenly seed,

The wise extract earth's most Hyblean bliss,

Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.

But for whom blossoms this Elysian flow'r?

Abroad they find, who cherish it at home.

Lorenzo! pardon what my love extorts,

An honest love, and not afraid to frown.

Tho' choice of follies fasten on the great,

None clings more obstinate, than fancy fond,

That sacred friendship is their easy prey;

Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,

Or fascination of a high-born smile.

Their smiles, the great, and the coquet, throw out

For others hearts, tenacious of their own;

And we no less of ours, when such the bait.

Ye Fortune's cofferers! ye pow'rs of wealth!

Can gold gain friendship? Impudence of hope!

As well mere man an angel might beget.

Love, and love only, is the loan for love.

Lorenzo! pride repress; nor hope to find

A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.

All like the purchase; few the price will pay;

And this makes friends such miracles below.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme)

I shew thee friendship delicate, as dear,

Of tender violations apt to die?

Reserve will wound it; and distrust, destroy.  
 Deliberate on all things with thy friend;  
 But since friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough,  
 Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core;  
 First, on thy friend, delib'rate with thyself;  
 Pause, ponder, sift; not eager in the choice,  
 Nor jealous of the chosen; fixing, fix;  
 Judge before friendship, then confide till death.  
 Well, for thy friend; but nobler far for thee;  
 How gallant danger for earth's highest prize!  
 A friend is worth all hazards we can run.  
 "Poor is the friendless master of a world:  
 "A world in purchase for a friend is gain."  
 So sung he, (angels hear that angel sing!  
 Angels from friendship gather half their joy.)  
 So sung Philander, as his friend went round  
 In the rich ichor, in the generous blood  
 Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,  
 A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.  
 He drank long health, and virtue, to his friend;  
 His friend, who warm'd him more, who more inspir'd.  
 Friendship's the wine of life; but friendship new  
 (Not such was his) is neither strong, nor pure.  
 O! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,  
 And elevating spirit, of a friend,  
 For twenty summers rip'ning by my side;  
 All feculence of falsehood long thrown down;  
 All social virtues rising in his soul;  
 As crystal clear; and smiling as they rise!  
 Here nectar flows; it sparkles in our sight;  
 Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.  
 High-flavour'd blifs for gods! on earth how rare!  
 On earth how lost!—Philander is no more.  
 Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song?  
 Am I too warm? too warm I cannot be.  
 I lov'd him much; but now I love him more.  
 Like birds, whose beauties languish, half conceal'd,  
 Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes

Expanded shine with azure, green, and gold;  
How blessings brighten as they take their flight!  
His flight Philander took; his upward-flight,  
If ever soul ascended. Had he dropt,  
(That eagle genius!) O had he let fall  
One feather as he flew; I, then, had wrote  
What friends might flatter; prudent foes forbear;  
Rivals scarce damn; and Zoilus reprieve.  
Yet what I can I must: it were profane  
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,  
And cast in shadows his illustrious close.  
Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime,  
Momentous most to man, shou'd sleep unsung!  
And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd,  
Painim or Christian; to the blush of wit.  
Man's highest triumph! man's profoundest fall!  
The Death-bed of the just! is yet undrawn  
By mortal hand; it merits a divine:  
Angels should paint it, angels ever there;  
There, on a post of honour, and of joy.

Dare I presume, then? But Philander bids;  
And glory tempts, and inclination calls—  
Yet am I struck; as struck the soul, beneath  
Aerial groves impenetrable gloom;  
Or, in some mighty ruin's solemn shade;  
Or, gazing by pale lamps on high born dust,  
In vaults! thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings!  
Or, at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.  
It is religion to proceed: I pause—  
And enter, aw'd, the temple of my theme.  
Is it his death-bed! No, it is his shrine;  
Behold him, there, just rising to a god.

The chamber where the good man meets his fate,  
Is privileg'd beyond the common walk  
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.  
Fly, ye profane! if not, draw near with awe,  
Receive the blessing, and adore the chance,  
That threw in this Bethesda your disease;



If unrestor'd by this, despair your cure.  
 For, here, resistless demonstration dwells;  
 A deathbed's a detector of the heart.  
 Here tir'd Dissimulation drops her masque,  
 Thro' life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!  
 Here, *real* and *apparent* are the same:  
 You see the man; you see his hold on heav'n;  
 If sound his virtue; as Philander's sound.  
 Heav'n waits not the last moment; owns her friends  
 On this side death; and points them out to men,  
 A lecture, silent, but of sov'reign pow'r!  
 To vice confusion; and to virtue, peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,  
 Virtue alone has majesty in death;  
 And greater still the more the tyrant frowns.  
 Philander! he severely frown'd on thee.  
 "No warning giv'n! unceremonious fate!  
 "A sudden rush from life's meridian joys!  
 "A wrench from all we love! from all we are!  
 "A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque  
 "Beyond conjecture! feeble nature's dread!  
 "Strong Reason's shudder at the dark unknown!  
 "A sun extinguish'd! a just opening grave!  
 "And oh! the last, last, what? (can words express?  
 "Thought reach it?) the last—silence of a friend?"  
 Where are those horrors, that amazement, where,  
 The hideous group of ills, which singly shock,  
 Demand from man?—I thought him man till now.

Thro' nature's wreck, thro' vanquish'd agonies,  
 (Like the stars struggling thro' this midnight gloom)  
 What gleams of joy! what more than human peace!  
 Where, the frail mortal? the poor abject worm?  
 No, not in death, the mortal to be found.  
 His conduct is a legacy for all,  
 Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.  
 His comforters he comforts; great in ruin,  
 With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields,  
 His soul sublime; and closes with his fate.



NIGHT THE SECOND. 39

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene!  
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?  
His God sustains him in his final hour!  
His final hour brings glory to his God!  
Man's glory Heav'n vouchsafes to call her own.  
We gaze, we weep; mixt tears of grief and joy!  
Amazement strikes! Devotion bursts to flame!  
Christians adore! and Infidels believe!

As some tall tower, or lofty mountains brow,  
Detains the sun, illustrious from its height;  
While rising vapours, and descending shades,  
With damps, and darkness, drown the spacious vale:  
Undamp'd by doubt, undarken'd by despair,  
Philander, thus, augustly rears his head,  
At that black hour, which gen'ral horror sheds  
On the low level of th' inglorious throng:  
Sweet Peace, and heavenly Hope, and humble Joy,  
Divinely beam on his exalted soul;  
Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies,  
With incommunicable lustre, bright.

THE SECOND

The first part of the book is devoted to a description of the various species of the genus *Canis*, which includes the wolf, the dog, and the jackal. The author then proceeds to a detailed account of the habits and characteristics of these animals, and finally to a discussion of their domestication and use by man.

T H E  
COMPLAINT.

NIGHT the THIRD.

N A R C I S S A.

Humbly inscribed to her Grace

The DUCHESS of P——

*Ignoscenda quidem, seirent si ignoscere manes.* VIRG,

COMPLAINT

OF THE

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...

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...

## NIGHT the THIRD.

FROM dreams, where thought in fancy's maze  
runs mad,

To reason, that heav'n-lighted lamp in man,  
Once more I wake ; and at the destin'd hour,  
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,  
I keep my assignation with my wo.

O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,  
Lost to the noble fallies of the soul!

Who think it solitude to be alone.

Communion sweet! communion large and high!

Our reason, guardian angel, and our God!

Then nearest these, when others most remote;

And all, ere long, shall be remote, but these.

How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,

A stranger! unacknowledg'd! unapprov'd!

Now woo them; wed them; bind them to thy breast:

To win thy wish, creation has no more.

Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend——

But friends, how mortal! dang'rous the desire.

Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards!

Inebriate at fair fortune's fountain-head,

And reeling thro' the wilderness of joy;

Where sense runs Savage, broke from Reason's chain,

And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.

My fortune is unlike; unlike my song;

Unlike the deity my song invokes.

I to Day's soft-ey'd sister pay my court,

(Endymion's rival!) and her aid implore;

Now first implor'd in succour to the muse,

Thou who didst lately borrow \* Cynthia's form,

And modestly forego thine own! O thou,

Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire!

Say, why not Cynthia patroness of song?

\* At the duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

As thou her crescent, she thy character  
 Assumes; still more a goddess by the change.  
 Are there demurring wits, who dare dispute  
 This revolution in the world inspir'd?  
 Ye train Pierian! to the lunar sphere,  
 In silent hour, address your ardent call:  
 For aid immortal; lest her brother's right.  
 She, with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads  
 The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,  
 A strain for gods! deny'd to mortal ear.  
 Transmit it, heard, thou silver queen of heaven!  
 What title or what name endears thee most?  
 Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe!——or dost hear  
 With higher gust, fair P——d of the skies?  
 Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,  
 More pow'rful than of old Circean charm?  
 Come; but from heav'nly banquets with thee bring  
 The soul of song; and whisper in mine ear  
 The theft divine; or in propitious dreams  
 (For dreams are thine) transfuse it thro' the breast  
 Of thy first votary——but not thy last;  
 If, like thy name-sake, thou art ever kind.  
 And kind thou wilt be; kind on such a theme,  
 A theme so like thee, a quite lunar theme,  
 Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair?  
 A theme that rose all pale, and told my soul  
 'Twas night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;  
 A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp,  
 Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb.  
 Narcissa follows, e'er his tomb is clos'd.  
 Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;  
 They love a train, they tread each other's heel;  
 Her death invades his mournful right, and claims  
 The grief that started from my lids for him;  
 Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,  
 Or shares it, ere it falls. So frequent death,  
 Sorrow he more than causes, he confounds;  
 For human sighs his rival strokes contend,



# NIGHT THE THIRD. 45

And make distress, distraction. O Philander!  
 What was thy fate? a double fate to me;  
 Portent, and pain! a menace, and a blow!  
 Like the black raven hov'ring o'er my peace,  
 Not less a bird of omen, than of prey.  
 It call'd Nacissa long before her hour;  
 It call'd her tender soul, by break of bliss,  
 From the first blossom, from the buds of joy;  
 Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves  
 In this inclement clime of human life.

Sweet harmonist! and beautiful as sweet!  
 And young as beautiful! and soft as young!  
 And gay as soft, and innocent as gay!  
 And happy (if aught happy here) as good!  
 For fortune fond had built her nest on high.  
 Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,  
 Transfixt by Fate, (who loves a lofty mark),  
 How from the summit of the grove she fell,  
 And left it unharmonious! all its charm  
 Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song!  
 Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,  
 Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain  
 (O to forget her!) thrilling thro' my heart!  
 Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy; this group  
 Of bright ideas, flow'rs of paradise,  
 As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,  
 Kneel, and present it to the skies; as all  
 We gues of heav'n: And these were all our own;  
 And she was mine; and I was—*was*!—most blest—  
 Gay title of the deepest misery!  
 As bodies grow more pond'rous, robb'd of life;  
 Good lost weighs more in grief, than gain'd, in joy.  
 Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,  
 Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;  
 And if in death still lovely, lovelier there;  
 Far lovelier! pity swells the tide of love.  
 And will not the severe excuse a sigh?  
 Scorn the proud man that is asham'd to weep:

Our tears indulg'd indeed deserve our shame.  
Ye that e'er lost an angel! pity me.

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,  
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight;  
And on her cheek, the residence of Spring,  
Pale Omen sat; and scatter'd fears around  
On all that saw (and who would cease to gaze,  
That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,  
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid North,  
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,  
And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun  
(As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam,  
Deny'd his wonted succour; nor with more  
Regret beheld her drooping, than the bells  
Of lilies; fairest lilies, not so fair!

Queen lilies! and ye painted populace!  
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives;  
In morn and ev'ning dew your beauties bathe,  
And drink the sun; which gives your cheeks to glow,  
And out-blush (mine excepted) ev'ry fair;  
You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,  
Which often crop'd your odours, incense meet  
To thought so pure! Ye lovely fugitives!  
Coeval race with man! for man you smile;  
Why not smile at him too? You share indeed  
His sudden pangs; but not his constant pain.

So man is made, nought ministers delight,  
But what his glowing passions can engage;  
And glowing passions, bent on aught below,  
Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale;  
And anguish, after rapture, how severe!  
Rapture? Bold man! who tempts the wrath divine,  
By plucking fruit deny'd to mortal taste,  
While here, presuming on the rights of Heav'n.  
For transport dost thou call on ev'ry hour,  
Lorenzo? at thy friend's expence be wise;  
Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;  
A broken reed, at best; but, oft, a spear;

On its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires: "

Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her:—thought  
 Repenting rallies, and wakes ev'ry wo. [repell'd,  
 Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour!  
 And when kind fortune, with thy lover, smil'd!  
 And when high-flavour'd thy fresh-op'ning joys!  
 And when blind man pronounc'd thy bliss complete!  
 And on a foreign shore; where strangers wept!  
 Strangers to thee; and, more surprising still,  
 Strangers to kindness, wept: their eyes let fall  
 Inhuman tears; strange tears! that trickled down  
 From marble hearts! obdurate tendernefs!  
 A tendernefs that call'd them more severe;  
 In spite of Nature's soft persuasion, steel'd:  
 While Nature melted, Superstition rav'd;  
 That mourn'd the dead, and this deny'd a grave.

Their sighs incens'd: sighs foreign to the will!  
 Their will the tyger suck'd, outrag'd the storm.  
 For, oh! the curst ungodliness of zeal!  
 While sinful flesh relented, spirit nurs'd  
 In blind infallibility's embrace,  
 The fainted spirit petrify'd the breast;  
 Deny'd the charity of dust, to spread  
 O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.  
 What could I do? what succour? what resource?  
 With pious sacrilege, a grave I stole;  
 With impious piety, that grave I wrong'd;  
 Short in my duty; coward in my grief!  
 More like her murderer, than friend, I crept,  
 With soft-suspended step, and muffled deep  
 In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.  
 I whisper'd what should echo thro' their realms;  
 Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.  
 Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes,  
 While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?  
 Pardon necessity, blest shade! of grief  
 And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;  
 Half-execration mingled with my prayer;

Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd;  
 Sore grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust;  
 Stamp'd the curst soil; and with humanity  
 (Deny'd Narcissa) wist'd them all a grave.

Glows my resentment into guilt? What guilt  
 Can equal violations of the dead?  
 The dead how sacred! Sacred is the dust  
 Of this heav'n-laboured form, erect, divine!  
 This heav'n-assum'd majestic robe of earth,  
 He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse  
 With azure bright, and cloth'd the sun in gold.  
 When ev'ry passion sleeps that can offend;  
 When strikes us ev'ry motive that can melt;  
 When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,  
 That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;  
 Then, spleen to dust? the dust of innocence?  
 An angel's dust!—This Lucifer transcends:  
 When he contended for the patriarch's bones,  
 'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride;  
 The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

Far less than this is shocking in a race  
 Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love;  
 And uncreated, but for love divine;  
 And but for love divine, this moment, lost,  
 By fate reorb'd, and sunk in endless night.  
 Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things  
 Most horrid! 'mid stupendous, highly strange!  
 Yet oft his courtesies are smother wrongs;  
 Pride brandishes the favours he confers,  
 And contumelious his humanity:  
 What then his vengeance? Hear it not, ye stars!  
 And thou, pale moon! turn paler at the sound;  
 Man is to man the forest, surest ill.  
 A previous blast foretells the rising storm;  
 O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;  
 Volcanos bellow ere they disembogue;  
 Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour;  
 And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire.

Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,  
 And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.  
 Is this the flight of fancy? Would it were!  
 Heav'n's Sov'reign saves all beings, but himself,  
 That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

Fir'd is the muse? and let the muse be fir'd:  
 Who not inflam'd, when what he speaks he feels,  
 And in the nerve most tender, in his friends?  
 Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes;  
 He felt the truths I sing, and I in him.  
 But he, nor I, feel more; past ills, Narcissa!  
 Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!  
 Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;  
 Pangs num'rous, as the num'rous ills that swarm'd  
 O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clust'ring there  
 Thick as the locusts on the land of Nile,  
 Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.  
 Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)  
 How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd!  
 An aspic, each; and all, an Hydra-wo.  
 What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—  
 Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?  
 This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews;  
 And each tear mourns its own distinct distress;  
 And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands  
 Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.  
 A grief like this proprietors excludes:  
 Not friends alone such obsequies deplore;  
 They make mankind the mourner; carry sighs  
 Far as the fatal fame can wing her way,  
 And turn the gayest thought of gayest age  
 Down their right channel, thro' the vale of death.  
 The vale of death! that hush'd Cimmerian vale,  
 Where darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,  
 With raven wing incumbent waits the day  
 (Dread day!) that interdicts all future change.  
 That subterranean world, that land of ruin!  
 Fit walk, Lorenzo, for proud human thought!



There let my thought expatiate; and explore  
 Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments,  
 Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.  
 For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,  
 My soul! "the fruits of dying friends survey;  
 "Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;  
 "Give death his eulogy; thy fear subdue;  
 "And labour that first palm of noble minds,  
 "A manly scorn of terror from the tomb."

This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave.  
 As poets feign'd from Ajax' streaming blood  
 Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flow'r;  
 Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.  
 And, first, of dying friends; what fruit from these?  
 It brings us more than triple aid; an aid  
 To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,  
 To damp our brainless ardors; and abate  
 That glare of life, which often blinds the wise.  
 Our dying friends are pioneers, to smoothe  
 Our rugged pass to death; to break those bars  
 Of terror, and abhorrence, nature throws  
 Cross our obstructed way; and, thus, to make  
 Welcome, as safe, our port from ev'ry storm.  
 Each friend by fate snatch'd from us, is a plume  
 Pluck'd from the wing of hum an vanity,  
 Which makes us stoop from our aerial height,  
 And, damp'd with omen of our own decease,  
 On drooping pinions of ambition low'r'd,  
 Just skim earth's surface ere we break it up,  
 O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,  
 And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends  
 Are angels sent on errands full of love;  
 For us they languish, and for us they die:  
 And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain?  
 Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hov'ring shades,  
 Which wait the revolution in our hearts?  
 Shall we disdain their silent, soft address;



Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer?  
 Senseless, as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,  
 Tread under foot their agonies and groans,  
 Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?

Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;  
 Give it its wholsome empire; let it reign,  
 That kind chastiser of the soul to joy!  
 Its reign will spread thy glory's conquest far,  
 And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast:  
 Auspicious æra! golden days, begin!  
 The thought of death, shall, like a god, inspire.  
 And why not think on death? Is life the theme  
 Of ev'ry thought? and wish of ev'ry hour?  
 And song of ev'ry joy? Surprising truth!  
 The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.  
 To wave the num'rous ills that seize on life  
 As their own property, their lawful prey;  
 Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage,  
 His luxuries have left him no reserve,  
 No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights;  
 On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,  
 And in the tasteless present chews the past;  
 Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.  
 Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years  
 Have disinherited his future hours,  
 Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.

Live ever here, Lorenzo!—Shocking thought!  
 So shocking, they who wish, disown it too!  
 Disown from shame, what they from folly crave.  
 Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?  
 For what live ever here?—With labouring step  
 To tread our former footsteps? pace the round  
 Eternal? to climb life's worn, heavy wheel,  
 Which draws up nothing new? to beat, and beat,  
 The beaten track? to bid each wretched day  
 The former mock? to surfeit on the same,  
 And yawn o'er joys? or thank a misery,  
 For change, though sad? to see what we have seen?

Hear, till unheard, the same old flabber'd tale?  
 To taste the tasted, and at each return  
 Less tasteful? o'er our palates to decant  
 Another vintage? strain a flatter year,  
 Thro' loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?  
 Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits!  
 Ill-ground, and worse concocted! load, not life!  
 The rational foul kennels of excess!  
 Still-streaming thorough-fairs of dull debauch!  
 Trembling each gulp, lest death should snatch the bowl!  
 Such of our fine ones is the wish refin'd!  
 So would they have it: elegant desire!  
 Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds?  
 But such examples might their riot awe.  
 Thro' want of virtue, that is, want of thought,  
 (Tho' on bright thought they father all their flights),  
 To what are they reduc'd? To love, and hate,  
 The same vain world; to censure, and espouse,  
 This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool  
 Each moment of each day; to flatter bad  
 Thro' dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,  
 Barren, to them, of good, and sharp with ills;  
 And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,  
 And infamous for wrecks of human hope—  
 Scar'd at the gloomy gulph, that yawns beneath.  
 Such are their triumphs! such their pangs of joy!  
 'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.  
 This hugg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?  
 One only; but that one, what all may reach;  
 Virtue—She, wonder-working goddess! charms  
 That rock to bloom; and tames the painted shrew;  
 And, what will more surprise, Lorenzo! gives  
 To life's sick, nauseous iteration, change;  
 And straitens nature's circle to a line.  
 Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo? lend an ear,  
 A patient ear, thou'lt blush to disbelieve.  
 A languid, leaden, iteration reigns,  
 And ever must, o'er those, whose joys are joys

Of sight, smell, taste: the cuckow-seasons sing  
The same dull note to such as nothing prize,  
But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,  
To doating sense indulge. But nobler minds,  
Which relish fruits unripen'd by the sun,  
Make their days various; various as the dyes  
On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.  
On minds of dove-like innocence possess'd,  
On light'ned minds, that bask in Virtue's beams,  
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves  
In that, for which they long, for which they live.  
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heav'nly hope,  
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;  
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents  
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;  
While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel  
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,  
Makes their fair prospect fairer ev'ry hour;  
Advancing virtue in a line to bliss;  
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire!  
And bliss, which Christian schemes alone ensure!

And shall we then, for Virtue's sake, commence  
Apostates? and turn infidels for joy?  
A truth it is, few doubt, but fewer trust,  
"He sins against this life, who slight's the next."  
What is this life? how few their fav'rite know!  
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,  
By passionately loving life, we make  
Lov'd life unlovely; hugging her to death.  
We give to Time Eternity's regard;  
And, dreaming, take our passage for our port.  
Life has no value as an end, but means;  
An end deplorable! a means divine!  
When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;  
A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much.  
Like some fair hum'rists, life is most enjoy'd,  
When courted least; most worth, when disesteem'd;  
Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;

In prospect, richer far ; important ! awful !  
 Not to be mention'd, but with shouts of praise !  
 Not to be thought on, but with tides of joy !  
 The mighty basis of eternal bliss !

Where now the barren rock ? the painted shrew ?  
 Where now, Lorenzo ! life's eternal round ?  
 Have I not made my triple promise good ?  
 Vain is the world ; but only to the vain.  
 To what compare we then this varying scene,  
 Whose worth ambiguous rises and declines,  
 Waxes and wanes ? (In all propitious, Night  
 Assists me here) compare it to the moon ;  
 Dark in herself, and indigent ; but rich  
 In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere :  
 When gross guilt interposes, lab'ring earth,  
 O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy ;  
 Her joys, at brightest, pallid, to that font  
 Of full effulgent glory whence they flow.

Nor is that glory distant : O Lorenzo !  
 A good man, and an angel ! these between  
 How thin the barrier ! What divides their fate ?  
 Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year ;  
 Or if an age, it is a moment still ;  
 A moment, or eternity's forgot.  
 Then be, what once they were who now are gods ;  
 Be what Philander was, and claim the skies.  
 Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass ?  
 The soft transition call it ; and be cheer'd !  
 Such it is often, and why not to thee ?  
 To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,  
 And may itself procure what it presumes.  
 Life is much flatter'd, death is much traduc'd ;  
 Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.  
 " Strange competition ! "—True, Lorenzo ! strange !  
 So little Life can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust ;  
 Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.  
 Thro' chinks, styl'd organs, dim Life peeps at light ;

Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day;  
 All eye, all ear, the disembod' d pow'r.  
 Death has feign'd evils, Nature shall not feel;  
 Life, ill's substantial, Wisdom cannot shun.  
 Is not the mighty Mind, that son of Heaven!  
 By tyrant Life dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd?  
 By Death enlarg'd, ennobled, deify'd?  
 Death but entombs the body; Life the soul.

"Is Death then guiltless? How he marks his way  
 "With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!  
 "Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!  
 "With various lustres these light up the world,  
 "Which Death puts out, and darkens human race."  
 I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just:  
 The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror!  
 Death humbles these; more barb'rous Life, the man.  
 Life is the triumph of our mould'ring clay;  
 Death, of the spirit infinite! divine!  
 Death has no dread, but what frail Life imparts;  
 Nor Life true joy, but what kind Death improves.  
 No bliss has Life to boast, till Death can give  
 Far greater; Life's a debtor to the grave,  
 Dark lattice! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life,  
 Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,  
 To cater for the sense; and serve at boards,  
 Where ev'ry ranger of the wilds, perhaps  
 Each reptile, justly claims our upper hand.  
 Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,  
 In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd!  
 Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death,  
 Which gives thee to repose in festive bow'rs,  
 Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,  
 And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,  
 And eternize the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss!  
 What need I more? O death, the palm is thine.

Then welcome, Death! thy dreaded harbingers,  
 Age, and Disease; Disease, tho' long my guest;



That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life;  
Which, pluck'd a little more, will toll the bell,  
That calls my few friends to my funeral;  
Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,  
While Reason and Religion, better taught,  
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb  
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory;  
It binds in chains the raging ills of life;  
Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,  
Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his pow'r.  
That ills corrosive, cares importunate,  
Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine.  
Our day of dissolution!—name it right;  
'Tis our great pay-day; 'tis our harvest, rich  
And ripe: what tho' the sickle, sometimes keen,  
Just scars us, as we reap the golden grain?  
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.  
Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,  
Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays  
For mighty gain: the gain of each a life!  
But O! the last the former so transcends,  
Life dies, compar'd; Life lives beyond the grave.  
And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?  
Death, the great counsellor, who man inspires  
With ev'ry nobler thought, and fairer deed!  
Death, the deliverer, who rescues man!  
Death, the rewarder, who the rescu'd crowns!  
Death, that absolves my birth; a curse without it!  
Rich Death, that realizes all my cares,  
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it, a chimera!  
Death, of all pain the period, not of joy;  
Joy's source, and subject, still subsist unhurt;  
One, in my soul; and one, in her great Sire;  
Tho' the four winds were warring for my dust.  
Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,  
Tho' prison'd there, my dust too I reclaim,  
(To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres)  
And live entire. Death is the crown of life:



NIGHT THE THIRD. 57

Were death deny'd, poor man would live in vain ;  
Were death deny'd, to live would not be life ;  
Were death deny'd, ev'n fools would wish to die.  
Death wounds to cure ; we fall ; we rise ; we reign !  
Spring from our fetters ; fasten in the skies ;  
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight :  
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost,  
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.  
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death ?  
When shall I die ? when shall I live for ever ?



THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT the FOURTH.

THE  
CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

CONTAINING,  
Our only CURE for the FEAR of DEATH;  
AND  
Proper SENTIMENTS of HEART on that  
inestimable Blessing.

Humbly inscribed to  
The Honourable Mr YORK E.

COMPLAINT

OF THE

CHURCH

AND

OF THE

17

## NIGHT the FOURTH.

A MUCH indebted muse, O Yorke! intrudes.  
 Amidst the smiles of fortune, and of youth,  
 Thine ear is patient of a serious song.  
 How deep implanted in the breast of man  
 The dread of death! I sing its sov'reign cure.

Why start at death? Where is he? Death arriv'd  
 Is past; not come, or gone, he's never here.  
 Ere hope, sensation fails; black-boding man  
 Receives, not suffers, death's tremendous blow.  
 The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;  
 The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;  
 These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,  
 The terrors of the living, not the dead.  
 Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch,  
 Man makes a death which Nature never made;  
 Then on the point of his own fancy falls,  
 And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.

But were death frightful, what has age to fear?  
 If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,  
 And shelter in his hospitable gloom.  
 I scarce can meet a monument, but holds  
 My younger; every date cries—"Come away."  
 And what recalls me? Look the world around,  
 And tell me what: the wisest cannot tell.  
 Should any born of woman give his thought  
 Full range, on just dislike's unbounded field;  
 Of things, the vanity; of men, the flaws;  
 Flaws in the best; the many, flaw all o'er,  
 As leopards spotted, or as Ethiops dark;  
 Vivacious ill; good dying immature,  
 (How immature, Narcissa's marble tells),  
 And at its death bequeathing endless pain;

His heart, tho' bold, would sicken at the sight,  
And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant  
To lucky life) some perquisites of joy;  
A time there is, when, like a thrice-told tale,  
Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,  
But from our comment on the comedy,  
Pleasing reflections on parts well sustain'd,  
Or purpos'd emendations where we fail'd,  
Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,  
When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,  
Toss Fortune back her tinsel and her plume,  
And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.

With me, that time is come; my world is dead:  
A new world rises, and new manners reign:  
Foreign comedians, a spruce band! arrive,  
To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.  
What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze,  
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;  
Nor that the worst: ah me! the dire effect  
Of loit'ring here, of death defrauded long;  
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)  
My very master knows me not.—

Shall I dare say, peculiar is the fate?  
I've been so long remember'd, I'm forgot.  
An object ever pressing dims the sight,  
And hides behind its ardor to be seen.  
When in his courtiers ears I pour my plaint,  
They drink it as the nectar of the great;  
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow;  
Refusal! canst thou wear a smoother form?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme:  
Who cheapens life, abates the fear of death:  
Twice-told the period spent on stubborn Troy,  
Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege;  
Ambition's ill-judged effort to be rich.  
Alas! ambition makes my little less;  
Embitt'ring the possess'd: why wish for more?



NIGHT THE FOURTH. 63

Wishing, of all employments, is the worst ;  
 Philophy's reverse ! and health's decay !  
 Were I as plump as stall'd theology,  
 Wishing would waste me to this shade again :  
 Were I as wealthy as a South-sea dream,  
 Wishing is an expedient to be poor :  
 Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool ;  
 Caught at a court ; purg'd off by purer air  
 And simpler diet, gifts of rural life !

Bless'd be that hand divine which gently laid  
 My heart at rest beneath this humble shed.  
 The world's a stately bark, on dang'rous seas,  
 With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril :  
 Here, on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,  
 I hear the tumult of the distant throng,  
 As that of seas remote, or dying storms ;  
 And meditate on scenes more silent still ;  
 Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death,  
 Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,  
 Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,  
 Eager Ambition's fiery chace I see ;  
 I see the circling hunt of noisy men  
 Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,  
 Pursuing, and pursu'd, each other's prey ;  
 As wolves, for rapine ; as the fox, for wiles ;  
 Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour ?  
 What tho' we wade in wealth, or soar in fame ?  
 Earth's highest stations ends in, " Here he lyes :"  
 And " dust to dust " concludes her noblest song.  
 If this song lives, posterity shall know  
 One, tho' in Britain born, with courtiers bred,  
 Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late ;  
 Nor on his subtle deathbed plann'd his scheme  
 For future vacancies in church or state ;  
 Some avocation deeming it—to die ;  
 Unbit by rage canine of dying rich ;  
 Guilt's blunder ! and the loudest laugh of hell.

O my coevals! remnants of yourselves!  
 Poor human ruins, tott'ring o'er the grave!  
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,  
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,  
 Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil?  
 Shall our pale, wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,  
 Trembling at once with eagerness and age?  
 With av'rice and convulsions grasping hard?  
 Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?  
 Man wants but little; nor that little, long;  
 How soon must he resign his very dust,  
 Which frugal nature lent him for an hour!  
 Years unexperienc'd rush on num'rous ills;  
 As soon as man, expert from time, has found  
 The key of life, it opes the gate of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,  
 And miss such numbers, numbers too of such,  
 Firmest in health, and greener in their age,  
 And stricter on their guard, and sifter far  
 To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe  
 I still survive: and am I fond of life,  
 Who scarce can think it possible I live?  
 Alive by miracle! or, what is next,  
 Alive by Mead! if I am still alive,  
 Who long have bury'd what gives life to live,  
 Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.  
 Life's lee is not more shallow than impure  
 And vapid; sense and reason shew the door,  
 Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.  
 O thou great Arbiter of life and death!  
 Nature's immortal, immaterial Sun!  
 Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth  
 From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay  
 The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath  
 The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,  
 To drink the spirit of the golden day,  
 And triumph in existence; and could know  
 No motive, but my bliss; and hast ordain'd

# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 65

A rise in blessing! with the patriarch's joy,  
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;  
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust;  
Or life, or death, is equal; neither weighs:  
All weight in this—O let me live to thee!

Tho' Nature's terrors thus may be repress'd,  
Still frowns grim Death; Guilt points the tyrant's spear.  
And whence all human guilt? From death forgot.  
Ah me! too long I set at nought the swarm  
Of friendly warnings, which around me flew;  
And smil'd, unsmitten: small my cause to smile!  
Death's admonitions, like shafts upwards shot,  
More dreadful by delay, the longer ere  
They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound.  
O think how deep, Lorenzo! here it stings:  
Who can appease its anguish? how it burns!  
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd thought can draw?  
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,  
And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb?

With joy—with grief, that healing had I see;  
Ah, too conspicuous! it is fix'd on high.  
On high!—what means my phrenzy? I blaspheme;  
Alas, how low! how far beneath the skies!  
The skies it form'd; and now it bleeds for me—  
But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds;  
Draw the dire steel—Ah no! the dreadful blessing  
What heart, or can sustain, or dares forego?  
There hangs all human hope; that nail supports  
The falling universe: that gone, we drop;  
Horror receives us; and the dismal wish  
Creation had been smother'd in her birth—  
Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust;  
When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne!  
In heav'n itself can such indulgence dwell?  
O what a groan was there! a groan not his!  
He seiz'd our dreadful right; the load sustain'd;  
And heav'd the mountain from a guilty world.  
A thousand worlds, so bought, were bought too dear.

66 THE COMPLAINT:

Sensations new in angels' bosoms rise;  
Suspend their song; and make a pause in bliss.

O for their song, to reach my lofty theme!  
Inspire me, Night! with all thy tuneful spheres;  
Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,  
And shew to men the dignity of man;  
Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.  
Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,  
And Christian languish? On our hearts, not heads,  
Falls the foul infamy: my heart! awake.  
What can awake thee, unawak'd by this,  
"Expended Deity on human weal?"  
Feel the great truths, which burst the tenfold night  
Of Heathen error, with a golden flood  
Of endless day: to feel, is to be fired;  
And to believe, Lorenzo! is to feel.

Thou most indulgent, most tremendous Pow'r!  
Still more tremendous for thy wond'rous love!  
That arms, with awe more awful, thy commands,  
And foul transgression dips in sevenfold night;  
How our hearts tremble at thy love immense!  
In love immense, inviolably just!  
Thou, rather than thy justice should be stain'd,  
Didst stain the cross; and, work of wonders far  
The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.  
Bold thought! shall I dare speak it? or repress?  
Should man more execrate, or boast, the guilt  
Which rous'd such vengeance? which such love in-  
flam'd?

O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with outstretch'd arms,  
Stern Justice, and soft-smiling Love, embrace,  
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,  
When seem'd its majesty to need support,  
Or that, or man, inevitably lost.  
What, but the fathomless of thought divine,  
Could labour such expedient from despair,  
And rescue both? both rescue! both exalt!  
O how are both exalted by the deed!

# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 67

The wond'rous deed! or shall I call it more?  
 A wonder in Omnipotence itself!  
 A mystery no less to gods than men!  
 Not thus our infidels th' Eternal draw,  
 A God all o'er, consummate, absolute;  
 Full-orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:  
 They set at odds Heav'n's jarring attributes;  
 And, with one excellence, another wound;  
 Maim Heav'n's perfection; break its equal beams;  
 Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,  
 Undeify'd by their opprobrious praise:  
 A God all mercy is a God unjust.  
 Ye brainless wits! ye baptiz'd infidels!  
 Ye worse for mending! wash'd to fouler stains!  
 The ransom was paid down; the fund of Heav'n,  
 Heav'n's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,  
 Amazing, and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,  
 All price beyond: tho' curious to compute,  
 Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum:  
 Its value vast, ungrasp'd by minds create,  
 For ever hides, and glows, in the Supreme.  
 And was the ransom paid? It was; and paid  
 (What can exalt the bounty more?) for you.  
 The sun beheld it—No, the shocking scene  
 Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;  
 Not such as this; not such as Nature makes:  
 A midnight Nature shudder'd to behold;  
 A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without  
 Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown!  
 Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain? or start  
 At that enormous load of human guilt,  
 Which bow'd his blessed head; o'erwhelm'd his cross;  
 Made groan the centre; burst earth's marble womb,  
 With pangs, strange pangs! deliver'd of her dead?  
 Hell howl'd; and Heav'n that hour let fall a tear;  
 Heav'n wept, that men might smile! Heav'n bled, that  
 Might never die!— [man

And is devotion virtue? 'Tis compell'd;



What heart of stone, but glows at thoughts like these?  
 Such contemplations mount us; and should mount  
 The mind still higher; nor ever glance on man,  
 Unraptur'd, uninflam'd—Where roll my thoughts  
 To rest from wonders? other wonders rise;  
 And strike where-e'er they roll: my soul is caught:  
 Heav'n's sov'reign blessings, clust'ring from the cross,  
 Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,  
 The pris'ner of amaze!—In his blest life  
 I see the path, and in his death the price,  
 And in his great ascent the proof supreme,  
 Of immortality.—And did he rise?

Hear, O ye nations! hear it, O ye dead!  
 He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of death.  
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!  
 And give the King of glory? to come in.  
 Who is the King of glory? He who left  
 His throne of glory, for the pang of death.  
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!  
 And give the King of glory to come in.  
 Who is the king of glory? He who slew  
 The rav'nous foe, that gorg'd all human race:  
 The King of glory, He, whose glory fill'd  
 Heav'n with amazement at his love to man;  
 And with divine complacency beheld  
 Pow'rs most illumin'd, wilder'd in the theme.

The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?  
 Oh the burst gates, crush'd sting, demolish'd throne,  
 Last gasp, of vanquish'd death! Shout, earth and hea-  
 ven!

This sum of good to man. Whose nature, then,  
 Took wing and mounted with him from the tomb?  
 Then, then, I rose; then first humanity  
 Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,  
 (Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth;  
 Seiz'd in our name. E'er since, 'tis blasphemous  
 To call man mortal. Man's mortality [tion  
 Was, then, transfer'd to death; and heav'n's dura-



# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 69

Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,  
This child of dust.—Man, all immortal! hail;  
Hail, Heav'n, all lavish of strange gifts to man!  
Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss.

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,  
On Christian joy's exulting wing, above  
Th' Aonian mount?—Alas, small cause for joy!  
What if to pain immortal? if extent  
Of being, to preclude a close of wo?  
Where, then, my boast of immortality?  
I boast it still, tho' cover'd o'er with guilt:  
For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd.  
'Tis guilt alone can justify his death:  
Nor that, unless his death can justify  
Relenting guilt in Heav'n's indulgent sight.  
If, sick of folly, I relent; he writes  
My name in heav'n, with that inverted spear  
(A spear deep-dipt in blood!) which pierc'd his side,  
And open'd there a font for all mankind,  
Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink, and live:  
This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

And what is this?—Survey the wond'rous cure:  
And at each step, let higher wonder rise!  
“ Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon  
“ Thro' means, that speak its value infinite!  
“ A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!  
“ With blood divine of Him I made my foe!  
“ Persisted to provoke! tho' woo'd, and aw'd,  
“ Bless'd, and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still!  
“ A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne!  
“ Nor I alone; a rebel universe!  
“ My species up in arms! not one exempt!  
“ Yet for the foulest of the foul, he dies.  
“ Most joy'd for the redeem'd from deepest guilt!  
“ As if our race were held of highest rank,  
“ And Godhead dearer as more kind to man!”  
Bound, ev'ry heart! and ev'ry bosom, burn!  
Oh what a scale of miracles is here!

Its lowest round high-planted on the skies;  
 Its tow'ring summit lost beyond the thought  
 Of man or angel! Oh that I could climb  
 The wonderful ascent, with equal praise!  
 Praise, flow for ever, (if astonishment  
 Will give thee leave;) my praise, for ever flow;  
 Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heav'n  
 More fragrant than Arabia sacrific'd,  
 And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

So dear, so due to Heav'n, shall praise descend,  
 With her soft plume (from plausive angels wing  
 First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,  
 Thus diving in the pockets of the great?  
 Is praise the perquisite of ev'ry paw,  
 Tho' black as hell, that grapples well for gold?  
 Oh love of gold, thou meanest of amours!  
 Shall Praise her odours waste on Virtue's dead,  
 Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,  
 Earn dirty bread by washing Æthiops fair,  
 Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,  
 A scavenger in scenes, where vacant posts,  
 Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect  
 Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones,  
 Return, apostate Praise? thou vagabond!  
 Thou prostitute! to thy first love return,  
 Thy first, thy greatest, once-unrival'd theme.

There flow redundant; like Meander flow,  
 Back to thy fountain; to that Parent Power,  
 Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,  
 The soul to be. Men homage pay to men,  
 Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow,  
 In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,  
 Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,  
 Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing;  
 To prostrate angels an amazing scene!  
 O the presumption of man's awe for man!—  
 Man's Author, End, Restorer, Law, and Judge!  
 Thine, all: day thine; and thine this gloom of night,

# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 71

With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds:  
 What night eternal, but a frown from thee?  
 What heav'n's meridian glory, but thy smile?  
 And shall not praise be thine, not human praise?  
 While heav'n's high host on hallelujahs live?

O may I breathe no longer than I breathe  
 My soul in praise to Him who gave my soul,  
 And all her infinite of prospect fair,  
 Cut thro' the shades of hell, great Love! by thee,  
 Oh most Adorable! most Unador'd!  
 Where shall that praise begin, which ne'er should end?  
 Where-e'er I turn, what claim on all applause!  
 How is night's sable mantle labour'd o'er,  
 How richly wrought, with attributes divine!  
 What wisdom shines! what love! this midnight pomp,  
 This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid!  
 Built with divine ambition! nought to thee;  
 For others this profusion: Thou, apart,  
 Above, beyond! Oh tell me, mighty Mind!  
 Where art thou? shall I dive into the deep?  
 Call to the sun, or ask the roaring winds,  
 For their Creator? Shall I question loud  
 The thunder, if in that th' Almighty dwells?  
 Or holds He furious storms in streighten'd reins,  
 And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car?

What mean these questions?—Trembling I retract;  
 My prostrate soul adores the present GOD:  
 Praise I a distant deity? He tunes  
 My voice (if tun'd); the nerve, that writes, sustains:  
 Wrap'd in his being, I resound his praise:  
 But tho' past all diffus'd, without a shore,  
 His essence; local is his throne (as meet)  
 To gather the dispers'd (as standards call  
 The lifted from afar); to fix a point,  
 A central point, collective of his sons,  
 Since finite ev'ry nature but his own.

The nameless He, whose nod is nature's birth;  
 And nature's shield, the shadow of his hand;

Her dissolution, his suspended smile;  
 The great First-Last! pavilion'd high he sits  
 In darkness from excessive splendour borne,  
 By gods unseen, unless thro' lustre lost:  
 His glory, to created glory, bright,  
 As that to central horrors; he looks down  
 On all that soars, and spans immensity.

Tho' night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,  
 Boundless creation! what art thou? A beam,  
 A mere effluvium of his majesty:  
 And shall an atom of this atom-world  
 Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of Heaven?  
 Down to the centre should I send my thought  
 Thro' beds of glitt'ring ore and glowing gems,  
 Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay;  
 Goes out in darkness: if, on tow'ring wing,  
 I send it thro' the boundless vault of stars!  
 (The stars, tho' rich, what dross their gold to thee,  
 Great, good, wise, wonderful, eternal King!)  
 If to those conscious stars thy throne around,  
 Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing bliss;  
 And ask their strain; they want it, more they want,  
 Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,  
 Languid their energy, their ardor cold,  
 Indebted still, their highest rapture burns,  
 Short of its mark, defective, tho' divine.

Still more—This theme is man's, and man's alone;  
 Their vast appointments reach it not: they see  
 On earth a bounty not indulg'd on high;  
 And downward look for Heav'n's superior praise!  
 First-born of Ether! high in fields of light!  
 View man, to see the glory of your God!  
 Could angels envy, they had envy'd here:  
 And some did envy; and the rest, tho' gods,  
 Yet still gods unredeem'd (there triumphs man,  
 Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies)  
 They less would feel, tho' more adorn, my theme.  
 They sung creation (for in that they shar'd);

How rose in melody, that child of love!  
 Creation's great superior, man! is thine;  
 Thine is redemption; they just gave the key:  
 'Tis thine to raise, and eternize, the song;  
 Tho' human, yet divine; for should not this  
 Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here?  
 Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime;  
 Redemption! 'twas the labour of the skies;  
 Far more than labour—it was death in heav'n.  
 A truth so strange! 'twere bold to think it true;  
 If not far bolder still to disbelieve.

Here pause, and ponder: Was there death in heav'n?  
 What then on earth? on earth, which struck the blow?  
 Who struck it? Who?—O how is man enlarg'd,  
 Seen thro' this medium! how the pigmy tow'rs!  
 How counterpois'd, his origin from dust!  
 How counterpois'd, to dust his sad return!  
 How voided his vast distance from the skies!  
 How near he presses on the seraph's wing!  
 Which is the seraph? which the born of clay?  
 How this demonstrates, thro' the thickest cloud  
 Of guilt, and clay condens'd, the son of Heaven!  
 The double son; the made, and the re-made!  
 And shall Heav'n's double property be lost?  
 Man's double madness only can destroy.  
 To man the bleeding cross has promis'd all;  
 The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace;  
 Who gave his life, what grace shall He deny?  
 O ye! who, from this Rock of ages, leap,  
 Apostates, plunging headlong in the deep!  
 What cordial joy, what consolation strong,  
 Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,  
 Our int'rest in the Master of the storm!  
 Cling there, and in wreck'd Nature's ruins smile;  
 While vile apostates tremble in a calm.

Man, know thyself. All wisdom centres there:  
 To none man seems ignoble, but to man;  
 Angels that grandeur, men o'erlook, admire:



## 74 THE COMPLAINT:

How long shall human nature be *their* book,  
 Degen'rate mortal! and unread by thee?  
 The beam dim reason sheds shews wonders there;  
 What high contents! illustrious faculties!  
 But the grand comment, which displays at full  
 Our human height, scarce sever'd from divine,  
 By Heav'n compos'd, was publish'd on the cross.

Who looks on That, and sees not in himself  
 An awful stranger, a terrestrial god?  
 A glorious partner with the Deity  
 In that high attribute, immortal life?  
 If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm:  
 I gaze, and, as I gaze, my mounting soul  
 Catches strange fire, eternity! at thee;  
 And drops the world—or rather, more enjoys:  
 How chang'd the face of nature! how improv'd!  
 What seem'd a chaos, shines a glorious world,  
 Or, what a world, an Eden: heighten'd all;  
 It is another scene; another self;  
 And still another as time rolls along;  
 And that a self far more illustrious still.  
 Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades  
 Unpierc'd by bold conjecture's keenest ray,  
 What evolutions of surprising fate!  
 How nature opens, and receives my soul  
 In boundless walks of raptur'd thought! where gods  
 Encounter, and embrace me; what new births  
 Of strange adventures, foreign to the sun.  
 Where, what now charms, perhaps, whate'er exists,  
 Old Time, and fair Creation, are forgot!

Is this extravagant! Of man we form  
 Extravagant conception, to be just:  
 Conception unconfin'd wants wings to reach him:  
 Beyond its reach, the Godhead only, more.  
 He, the great Father! kindled at one flame  
 The world of rationals; one spirit pour'd  
 From spirit's awful fountain; pour'd himself  
 Thro' all their souls! but not in equal stream,



# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 75

Profuse, or frugal, of th' inspiring God,  
As his wife plan demanded : and when past  
Their various trials, in their various spheres,  
If they continue rational, as made,  
Reforbs them all into himself again ;  
His throne their centre, and his smile their crown.

Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,  
Tho' yet un Sung, as deem'd perhaps too bold !  
Angels are men of a superior kind ;  
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,  
High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight ;  
And men are angels, loaded for an hour,  
Who tread this miry vale, and climb with pain,  
And slipp'ry step, the bottom of the steep.  
Angels their failings, mortals have their praise ;  
While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,  
And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,  
Which flames eternal crimson through the skies.  
Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,  
Yet absent ; but not absent from their love.  
Michael has fought our battles ; Raphael sung  
Our triumphs ; Gabriel on our errands flown,  
Sent by the SOVEREIGN: and are these, O man!  
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn  
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute ?

Religion's all. Descending from the skies  
To wretched man, the goddess in her left  
Holds out this world, and in her right the next ;  
Religion! the sole voucher man is man ;  
Supporter sole of man above himself ;  
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,  
She gives the foul a soul that acts a god.  
Religion! providence! an after-state!  
Here is firm-footing ; here is solid rock ;  
This can support us ; all is sea besides ;  
Sinks under us ; bestorms, and then devours.  
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,  
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick, polluted air,  
 Darknefs, and stench, and suffocating damps,  
 And dungeon-horrors, by kind fate discharg'd,  
 Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure  
 Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise,  
 His heart exults, his spirits cast their load;  
 As if new-born, he triumphs in the change:  
 So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims,  
 And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth  
 Of ties terrestrial, set at large, she mounts  
 To reason's region, her own element,  
 Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness:  
 And, groaning Calvary, of thee! there shine  
 The noblest truths; there strongest motives sting;  
 There, sacred violence assaults the soul;  
 There, nothing but compulsion is forborn.  
 Can love allure us? or can terror awe?  
 He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun;  
 He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.  
 If in his love so terrible, what then  
 His wrath inflam'd? his tenderness on fire?  
 Like soft, smooth oil, out-blazing other fires?  
 Can pray'r, can praise, avert it?—Thou, my All!  
 My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!  
 My strength in age! my rise in low estate!  
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth! my world!  
 My light in darknefs! and my life in death!  
 My boast thro' time! bliss thro' eternity!  
 Eternity, too short to speak thy praise!  
 Or fathom thy profound of love to man!  
 To man of men the meanest, ev'n to me:  
 My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these!

What then art Thou? by what name shall I call thee?  
 Knew I the name devout archangels use,  
 Devout archangels should the name enjoy,  
 By me unrival'd; thousands more sublime,  
 None half so dear, as that, which, tho' unspoke,

# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 77

Still glows at heart : O how omnipotence  
Is lost in love! thou great PHILANTHROPIST!  
Father of angels! but the friend of man!  
Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born!  
Thou, who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand  
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!  
How art thou pleas'd, by bounty to distress!  
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,  
Too big for birth! to favour, and confound;  
To challenge, and to distance all return!  
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,  
And leave praise panting in the distant vale!  
Thy right too great, defrauds thee of thy due;  
And sacrilegious our sublimest song.  
But since the naked will obtains thy smile,  
Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,  
And future life symphonious to my strain,  
(That noblest hymn to heav'n!) for ever ly  
Intomb'd my fear death! and ev'ry fear,  
The dread of ev'ry evil, but Thy frown.

Whom see I yonder, so demurely smile?  
Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.  
Ye quietists, in homage to the skies!  
Serene! of soft address! who mildly make  
An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,  
Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,  
But for the blessing wrestle not with Heaven!  
Think you my song too turbulent, too warm?  
Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?  
Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd  
To touch things sacred? Oh for warmer still!  
Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my powers;  
Oh for an humbler heart, and prouder song!  
THOU, my much injur'd Theme! with that soft eye,  
Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look  
Compassion to the coldness of my breast,  
And pardon to the winter in my strain!  
Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen, formalists!

On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm;  
 Passion is reason, transport temper, here!  
 Shall Heaven, which gave us ardor, and has shewn  
 Her own for man so strongly, not disdain  
 What smooth emollients in theology  
 Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors preach,  
 That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise?  
 Rise odours sweet from incense uninflam'd?  
 Devotion, when lukewarm, is undevout;  
 But when it glows, its heat is struck to heaven,  
 To human hearts her golden harps are strung;  
 High heav'n's orchestra chaunts Amen to man.

Hear I, - or dream I hear, their distant strain,  
 Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of heaven,  
 Soft-wafted on celestial Pity's plume,  
 Thro' the vast spaces of the universe,  
 To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?  
 Oh when will Death (now stingless) like a friend,  
 Admit me of their choir? Oh when will death  
 This mould'ring, old, partition-wall throw down?  
 Give beings, one in nature, one abode?  
 Oh Death divine! that giv'st us to the skies!  
 Great future! glorious patron of the past,  
 And present! when shall I thy shrine adore?  
 From Nature's continent, immensely wide,  
 Immensely bless'd, this little isle of life,  
 This dark, incarcerating colony,  
 Divides us. Happy day! that breaks our chain;  
 That manumits; that calls from exile home;  
 That leads to Nature's great metropolis,  
 And re-admits us, thro' the guardian hand  
 Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne:  
 Who hears our Advocate, and, thro' his wounds  
 Beholding man, allows that tender name.  
 'Tis this makes Christian triumph a command:  
 'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise;  
 'Tis impious in a good man to be sad.

Seest thou, Lorenzo! where hangs all our hope?

NIGHT THE FOURTH. 79

Touch'd by the cross, we live ; or, more than die ;  
 That touch which touch'd not angels ; more divine  
 Than that, which touch'd confusion into form,  
 And darkness into glory ; partial touch !  
 Ineffably pre-eminent regard !  
 Sacred to man, and sov'reign thro' the whole  
 Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs  
 From heav'n thro' all-duration, and supports  
 In one illustrious and amazing plan  
 Thy welfare, Nature ! and thy God's renown ;  
 That touch, with charm celestial, heals the soul  
 Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,  
 Turns earth to heav'n, to heav'nly thrones transforms  
 The ghastly ruins of the mould'ring tomb.

Dost ask me when ? When HE who dy'd returns ;  
 Returns, how chang'd ! Where then the man of wo ?  
 In glory's terrors all the Godhead burns ;  
 And all his courts, exhausted by the tide  
 Of deities triumphant in his train,  
 Leave a stupendous solitude in heaven ;  
 Replenish'd soon ; replenish'd with increase  
 Of pomp, and multitude ; a radiant band  
 Of angels new, of angels from the tomb.

Is this by Fancy thrown remote ? and rise  
 Dark doubts between the promise and event ?  
 I send thee not to volumes for thy cure :  
 Read Nature ; Nature is a friend to truth ;  
 Nature is Christian, preaches to mankind,  
 And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.  
 Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight ?  
 Th' illustrious stranger passing, Terror sheds  
 On gazing nations, from his fiery train  
 Of length enormous ; takes his ample round  
 Thro' depths of ether ; coasts unnumber'd worlds,  
 Of more than solar glory ; doubles wide  
 Heav'n's mighty cape ; and then revisits earth,  
 From the long travel of a thousand years.  
 Thus, at the destin'd period, shall return



80 THE COMPLAINT:

He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze;  
And with him all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point;  
Or Hope precarious in low whisper breathes;  
Faith speaks aloud, distinct; ev'n adders hear,  
But turn, and dart into the dark again.  
Faith builds a bridge across the guiph of death,  
To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,  
And lands thought smoothly on the farther shore.  
Death's terror is the mountain Faith removes;  
That mountain-barrier between man and peace.  
'Tis faith disarms Destruction; and absolves,  
From ev'ry clamorous charge, the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve? Lorenzo!—"Reason bids,  
"All-sacred Reason."—Hold her sacred still;  
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame:  
All-sacred Reason! source, and soul, of all  
Demanding praise, on earth, or earth above!  
My heart is thine: deep in its inmost folds,  
Live thou with life; live dearer of the two.  
Wear I the blessed cross, by Fortune stamp'd  
On passive Nature, before thought was born?  
My birth's blind bigot! fir'd with local zeal!  
No; Reason rebaptiz'd me when adult;  
Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale;  
My heart became the convert of my head,  
And made that choice which once was but my fate.  
"On argument alone my faith is built:"

Reason pursu'd is faith; and unpursu'd,  
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more:  
And such our proof, that, or our faith is right,  
Or reason lies, and Heav'n design'd it wrong:  
Absolve we this? what, then, is blasphemy?

Fond as we are, and justly fond, of faith,  
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;  
The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear;  
Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flow'r:  
The fading flow'r shall die; but Reason lives



# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 81

Immortal, as her Father in the skies.  
 When Faith is virtue, Reason makes it so.  
 Wrong not the Christian; think not Reason yours:  
 'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear;  
 'Tis Reason's injur'd rights his wrath resents;  
 'Tis Reason's voice obey'd his glories crown;  
 To give lost Reason life, he pour'd his own:  
 Believe, and shew the reason of a man;  
 Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God;  
 Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb:  
 Thro' Reason's wounds alone thy faith can die;  
 Which dying, tenfold terror gives to death,  
 And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans, due  
 To those who push our antidote aside;  
 Those boasted friends to reason, and to man,  
 Whose fatal love stabs ev'ry joy, and leaves  
 Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart.  
 These pompous sons of Reason idoliz'd,  
 And vilify'd at once; of Reason dead,  
 Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old,  
 What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?  
 While love of truth thro' all their camp resounds,  
 They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray;  
 Spike up their inch of reason on the point  
 Of philosophic wit, call'd *argument*;  
 And then, exulting in their taper, cry,  
 "Behold the sun;" and, Indian-like, adore.

Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!  
 Thou maker of new morals to mankind!  
 The grand morality is love of Thee.  
 As wise as Socrates, if such they were,  
 (Nor will they 'bate of that sublime renown),  
 As wise as Socrates, might justly stand  
 The definition of a modern fool.

A CHRISTIAN is the highest style of man.  
 And is there, who the blessed cross wipes off,  
 As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow?

If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:  
The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,  
More struck with grief or wonder, who can tell?

Ye sold to sense! ye citizens of earth!  
(For such alone the Christian banner fly)  
Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?  
Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:  
"He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,  
"And says, he call'd another; that arrives,  
"Meets the same welcome; yet he still calls on;  
"Till one calls him, who varies not his call,  
"But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound,  
"Till nature dies, and judgment sets him free;  
"A freedom, far less welcome than his chain."

But grant man happy; grant him happy long;  
Add to life's highest prize her latest hour;  
That hour so late, is nimble in approach,  
That, like a post, comes on in full career;  
How swift the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud!  
Where is the fable of thy former years?  
Thrown down the gulph of time; as far from thee  
As they had ne'er been thine; the day in hand,  
Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going;  
Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone;  
And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd  
By strides as swift: eternity is all;  
And whose eternity? who triumphs there?  
Bathing for ever in the font of bliss!  
For ever basking in the Deity!  
Lorenzo! who?—Thy conscience shall reply.

O give it leave to speak; 'twill speak ere long,  
Thy leave unask'd: Lorenzo! hear it now,  
While useful its advice, its accent mild.  
By the great edict, the divine decree,  
Truth is deposited with man's last hour;  
An honest hour, and faithful to her trust;  
Truth, eldest daughter of the Deity;  
Truth, of his council, when he made the worlds;

# NIGHT THE FOURTH. 83

Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made;  
 Tho' silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,  
 Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,  
 That heav'n-commission'd hour no sooner calls,  
 But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,  
 Like him they fable under Ætna whelm'd,  
 The goddess bursts in thunder, and in flame;  
 Loudly convinces, and severely pains.  
 Dark demons I discharge, and hydra-stings;  
 The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell:  
 Just definition! tho' by schools untaught.  
 Ye deaf to truth! peruse this parson'd page,  
 And trust, for once, a prophet, and a priest;  
 "Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die."

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T H E  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT the FIFTH.

T H E  
R E L A P S E.

Humbly inscribed to the Right Honourable  
The Earl of LITCHFIELD.

VOL. III.

H

COMPTON

WILKINSON

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## NIGHT the FIFTH.

**L** ORENZO! to recriminate is just.  
 Fondness for fame is avarice of air.  
 I grant the man is vain, who writes for praise.  
 Praise no man e'er deserv'd; who sought no more.

As just thy second charge. I grant the muse  
 Has often blush'd at her degen'rate sons,  
 Retain'd by Sense to plead her filthy cause;  
 To raise the low, to magnify the mean,  
 And subtilize the gross into refin'd:  
 As if to magic numbers' pow'rful charm  
 'Twas giv'n to make a civet of their song  
 Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.  
 Wit, a true pagan, deifies the brute,  
 And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.

The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause.  
 We wear the chains of pleasure, and of pride.  
 These share the man; and these distract him too;  
 Draw diff'rent ways, and clash in their commands.  
 Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars;  
 But pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground.  
 Joys shar'd by brute-creation, pride resents;  
 Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy,  
 And both at once; a point too hard to gain!  
 But what can't wit, when stung by strong desire?

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprize.  
 Since joys of sense can't rise to reason's taste;  
 In subtle sophistry's laborious forge,  
 Wit hammers out a reason new, that swoops  
 'To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause.  
 Wit calls the graces the chaste zone to loose;  
 Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl:  
 A thousand phantoms, and a thousand spells,

88 THE COMPLAINT:

A thousand opiates scatters, to delude,  
To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,  
And the fool'd mind delightfully confound. [more;  
Thus that which shock'd the judgment, shocks no  
That which gave pride offence, no more offends.  
Pleasure and pride, by nature mortal foes,  
At war eternal, which in man shall reign,  
By wit's address, patch up a fatal peace,  
And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,  
From rank, refin'd to delicate and gay.  
Art, curst art! wipes off th' indebted blush  
From Nature's cheek, and bronzes ev'ry shame.  
Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,  
And infamy stands candidate for praise.

All writ by man in favour of the soul,  
These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend.  
The flow'rs of eloquence, profusely pour'd  
O'er spotted vice, fill half the letter'd world.  
Can pow'rs of genius exorcise their page,  
And consecrate enormities with song?

But let not these inexpressible strains  
Condemn the muse that knows her dignity;  
Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world  
As 'tis, in Nature's ample field a point,  
A point in her esteem; from whence to start,  
And run the round of universal space,  
To visit being universal there,  
And Being's Source, that utmost flight of mind!  
Yet, spite of this so vast circumference,  
Well knows, but what is moral, nought is great.  
Sing fyrens only? do not angels sing?  
There is in Poesy a decent pride,  
Which well becomes her when she speaks to Prose,  
Her younger sister; haply, not more wise.

Think'st thou, Lorenzo! to find pastimes here?  
No guilty passion blown into a flame,  
No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,  
No fairy field of fiction all on flower,

No rainbow colours, here, or filken tale :  
 But solemn counsels ; images of awe ;  
 Truths, which eternity lets fall on man  
 With double weight, thro' these revolving spheres,  
 This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade ;  
 Thoughts, such as shall revisit your last hour ;  
 Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires ;  
 And thy dark pencil, Midnight ! darker still  
 In melancholy dipt, embrowns the whole.

Yet this, ev'n this, my laughter-loving friends !  
 Lorenzo ! and thy brothers of the smile !  
 If what imports you most can most engage,  
 Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.  
 Or if you fail me, know, the wise shall taste  
 The truths I sing ; the truths I sing shall feel ;  
 And, feeling, give assent ; and their assent  
 Is ample recompence, is more than praise.  
 But chiefly thine, O Litchfield ! Nor mistake ;  
 Think not un introduc'd I force my way ;  
 Narcissa, not unknown, nor unall'd,  
 By virtue, or by blood, illustrious youth !  
 To thee, from blooming amaranthine bow'rs,  
 Where all the language harmony, descends  
 Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the muse :  
 A muse that will not pain thee with thy praise ;  
 Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspir'd.

O thou ! blest Spirit ! whether the supreme,  
 Great antemundane Father ! in whose breast  
 Embryo-creation, unborn being, dwelt,  
 And all its various revolutions roll'd  
 Present, tho' future ; prior to themselves ;  
 Whose breath can blow it into nought again !  
 Or, from his throne some delegated pow'r,  
 Who, audious of our peace, dost turn the thought  
 From vain and vile, to solid and sublime !  
 Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts  
 Of inspiration, from a purer stream,  
 And fuller of the God, than that which burst

From fam'd Castalia: nor is yet allay'd  
 My sacred thirst; though long my soul has rang'd  
 Through pleasing paths of moral, and divine,  
 By Thee sustain'd, and lighted by the stars.

By them best lighted are the paths of thought;  
 Nights are their days, their most illumin'd hours.  
 By day, the soul, o'erborne by life's career,  
 Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,  
 Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.  
 By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts  
 Impos'd, precarious, broken, ere mature.  
 By night, from objects free, from passions cool,  
 Thoughts uncontroul'd and unimpres'd, the births  
 Of pure election, arbitrary range,  
 Not to the limits of one world confin'd;  
 But from ethereal travels light on earth,  
 As voyagers drop anchor, for repose.

Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond  
 Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore:  
 Darkness has more divinity for me;  
 It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul  
 To settle on herself, our point supreme!  
 There lyes our theatre; there sits our Judge.  
 Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;  
 'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out  
 'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reason's reign  
 And Virtue's too; these tutelary shades  
 Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.  
 Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too:  
 It no less rescues virtue, than inspires.

Virtue, for ever frail, as fair, below,  
 Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,  
 Nor touches on the world, without a stain:  
 The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,  
 Immaculate, the manners of the morn.  
 Something we thought, is blotted; we resolv'd,  
 Is shaken; we renounc'd, returns again.  
 Each salutation may slide in a sin

Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.  
 Nor is it strange: light, motion, concourse, noise,  
 All, scatter us abroad; thought, outward-bound,  
 Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off  
 In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,  
 And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,  
 And acts with double force, by few repell'd.  
 Ambition fires ambition; love of gain  
 Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast;  
 Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe;  
 And inhumanity is caught from man;  
 From smiling man. A slight, a single glance,  
 And shot at random, often has brought home  
 A sudden fever, to the throbbing heart,  
 Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.  
 We see, we hear, with peril: safety dwells  
 Remote from multitude; the world's a school  
 Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around!  
 We must or imitate, or disapprove;  
 Must list as their accomplices, or foes:  
 That stains our innocence; this wounds our peace.  
 From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit  
 With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade.

This sacred shade and solitude, what is it?  
 'Tis the felt presence of the Deity.

Few are the faults we flatter when alone.  
 Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,  
 And looks, like other objects, black by night.  
 By night an Atheist half believes a God.

Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend;  
 The conscious moon, through every distant age,  
 Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall,  
 On Contemplation's eye, her purging ray.  
 The fam'd Athenian, he who woo'd from heav'n  
 Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,  
 And form their manners, not inflame their pride;  
 While o'er his head, as fearful to molest



His lab'ring mind, the stars in silence slide,  
 And seem all gazing on their future guest,  
 See him soliciting his ardent suit  
 In private audience: all the live-long night,  
 Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands;  
 Nor quits his theme, or posture, till the sun  
 (Rude drunkard rising rosy from the main!)  
 Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,  
 And gives him to the tumult of the world.  
 Hail, precious moments! stoln from the black waste  
 Of murder'd time! auspicious midnight, hail!  
 The world excluded, ev'ry passion hush'd,  
 And open'd a calm intercourse with heav'n,  
 Here the soul sits in council; ponders past,  
 Predestines future action; sees, not feels,  
 Tumultuous life; and reasons with the storm;  
 All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.

What awful joy! what mental liberty!  
 I am not pent in darkness; rather say  
 (If not too bold) in darkness I'm embower'd.  
 Delightful gloom! the clust'ring thoughts around  
 Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade;  
 But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.  
 Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that first fire,  
 Fountain of animation! whence descends  
 Urania, my celestial guest, who deigns  
 Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now  
 Conscious how needful discipline to man,  
 From pleasing dalliance with the charms of night  
 My wand'ring thought recalls, to what excites  
 Far other beat of heart; Narcissa's tomb!

Or is it feeble nature calls me back,  
 And breaks my spirit into grief again?  
 Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?  
 A cold slow puddle, creeping thro' my veins?  
 Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all.  
 What are we? how unequal! Now we soar,  
 And now we sink; to be the same, transcends



Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul  
 For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.  
 Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds  
 The blush of weakness to the bane of wo.  
 The noblest spirit fighting her hard fate,  
 In this damp, dusky region, charg'd with storms,  
 But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;  
 Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall.  
 Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;  
 And not to yield, tho' beaten, all our praise.

'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.  
 Tho' proud in promise, big in previous thought,  
 Experience damps our triumph. I, who late,  
 Emerging from the shadows of the grave,  
 Where grief detain'd me pris'ner, mounting high  
 Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,  
 And call'd mankind to glory, shook of pain,  
 Mortality shook off, in either pure,  
 And struck the stars; now feel my spirits fail;  
 They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,  
 Like him whom fable fledg'd with waxen wings,  
 In sorrow drown'd—but not in sorrow lost.  
 How wretched is the man who never mourn'd!  
 I dive for precious pearl in sorrow's stream:  
 Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves;  
 Takes all the torment, and rejects the pain,  
 (Inestimable gain!) and gives Heav'n leave  
 To make him but more wretched, not more wise.

If wisdom is our lesson (and what else  
 Ennobles man? what else have angels learnt?)  
 Grief! more proficients in thy school are made,  
 Than Genius, or proud Learning, e're could boast.  
 Voracious Learning, often over-fed,  
 Digests not into sense her motley meal.  
 This book-case, with dark booty almost burst,  
 This forager on others wisdom, leaves  
 Her native farm, her reason, quite untill'd.  
 With mixt manure she fursuits the rank soil,

Dung'd, but not dress'd ; and rich to beggary:  
A pomp untameable of weed prevails.

Her servant's wealth incumber'd wisdom mourns.

And what says Genius ? " Let the dull be wise."

Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong ;

And loves to boast, where blush men less inspir'd.

It pleads exemption from the laws of sense ;

Considers reason as a leveller ;

And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd.

That wise it could be, thinks an ample claim

To glory, and to pleasure gives the rest.

Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone.

Wisdom less shudders at a fool, than wit.

But Wisdom smiles when humbled mortals weep.

When sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,

And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning show'r ;

Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows ;

Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.

If so, Narcissa ! welcome my Relapse ;

I'll raise a tax on my calamity,

And reap rich compensation from my pain.

I'll range the plenteous intellectual field ;

And gather ev'ry thought of sov'reign pow'r

To chase the moral maladies of man ;

Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies,

Tho' natives of this coarse penurious soil ;

Nor wholly wither there, where seraphs sing,

Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd in Heaven.

Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same

In either clime, tho' more illustrious there.

These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,

Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb ;

And, peradventure, of no fading flow'rs.

Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend ?

" Th'importance of contemplating the tomb ;

" Why men decline it ; suicide's foul birth ;

" The various kinds of grief ; the faults of age ;

" And death's dread character—invite my song."

And, first, th' mportance of our end survey'd.  
Friends counsel quick dismission of our grief:  
Mistaken kindness! our hearts heal too soon.  
Are they more kind than he who struck the blow?  
Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,  
And banish peace, till nobler guests arrive,  
And bring it back a true and endless peace?  
Calamities are friends: as glaring day  
Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight;  
Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts  
Of import high, and light divine, to man.

The man how blest, who, sick of gaudy scenes,  
(Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves!)  
Is led by choice to take his fav'rite walk,  
Beneath Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,  
Unpierc'd by Vanity's fantastic ray:  
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,  
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!  
Lorenzo! read with me Narcissa's stone;  
(Narcissa was thy fav'rite) let us read  
Her moral stone; few doctors preach so well;  
Few orators so tenderly can touch  
The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!  
Apt words can strike, and yet in them we see  
Faint images of what we here enjoy.  
What cause have we to build on length of life?  
Temptations seize, when fear is laid asleep;  
And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,  
Truth, raddiant goddess? sallies on my soul,  
And puts delusion's dusky train to flight;  
Dispels the mists our sultry passions raise,  
From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene;  
And shews the real estimate of things,  
Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw;  
Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms;  
Detects temptation in a thousand lies:  
Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves,

And all they bleed for, as the summer's dust,  
 Driv'n by the whirlwind. Lighted by her beams,  
 I widen my horizon, gain new pow'rs,  
 See things invifible, feel things remote,  
 Am prefent with futurities; think nought  
 To man fo foreign as the joys poffefs'd,  
 Nought fo much his as thofe beyond the grave.

No folly keeps its colour in her fight;  
 Pale worldly wifdom lofes all her charms;  
 In pompous promife from her fchemes profound,  
 If future fate fhe plans, 'tis all in leaves,  
 Like Sybil, unſubſtantial, fleeting blifs!  
 At the firſt blaſt it vaniſhes in air.  
 Not fo, celeftial. Wouldſt thou know, Lorenzo!  
 How differ worldly wifdom, and divine?  
 Juſt as the waning, and the waxing moon.  
 More empty worldly wifdom ev'ry day;  
 And ev'ry day more fair her rival ſhines.  
 When later, there's leſs time to play the fool.  
 Soon our whole term for wifdom is expir'd,  
 (Thou know'ſt ſhe calls no council in the grave)  
 And everlaſting fool is writ in fire,  
 Or real wifdom wafts us to the ſkies.

As worldly fchemes reſemble Sy bil's loaves,  
 The good man's days to Sybil's books compare,  
 (In ancient ſtory read, thou know'ſt the tale)  
 In price ſtill riſing as in number leſs,  
 Ineſtimable quite his final hour.  
 For that, who thrones can offer, offer thrones;  
 Inſolvent worlds the purchaſe cannot pay.  
 "Oh let me die his death!" all nature cries.  
 "Then live his life."—All nature faulters here.  
 Our great phyſician to conſult,  
 To commune with the grave, our only cure. [yet,  
 What grave preſcribes the beſt?—A friend's; and  
 From a friend's grave, how ſoon we diſengage?  
 Ev'n to the deareſt, as his marble, cold.  
 Why are friends raviſh'd from us? 'Tis to bind,

By soft affection's ties, on human hearts,  
 The thought of death, which reason, too supine,  
 Or misemploy'd, so rarely fastens there.  
 Nor reason, nor affection, nor nor both  
 Combin'd, can break the withcrafts of the world.  
 Behold th' inexorable hour at hand!  
 Behold th' inexorable hour forgot!  
 And to forget it the chief aim of life,  
 Tho' well to ponder it is life's chief end.

Is death, that ever threatening, ne'er remote,  
 That all-important, and that only sure,  
 (Come when he will) an unexpected guest?  
 Nay, tho' invited by the loudest calls  
 Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still?  
 Tho' num'rous messengers are sent before  
 To warn his great arrival. What the cause,  
 The wond'rous cause, of this mysterious ill?  
 All heav'n looks down astonish'd at the sight.

Is it, that life has sown her joys so thick,  
 We can't thrust in a single care between?  
 Is it, that life has such a swarm of cares,  
 The thought of death can't enter for the throng?  
 Is it, that Time steals on with downy feet,  
 Nor wakes indulgence from her golden dream?  
 To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats;  
 We take the lying sister for the same.  
 Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook;  
 For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change.  
 In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice:  
 To the same life none ever twice awoke.  
 We call the brook the same; the same we think  
 Our life, tho' still more rapid in its flow;  
 Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,  
 And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say  
 (Retaining still the brook to bear us on)  
 That life is like a vessel on the stream?  
 In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide  
 Of Time descend, but not on Time intent:



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Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave;  
 Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;  
 We start, awake, look out; what see we there?  
 Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.

Is this the cause Death flies all human thought?  
 Or is it judgment by the will struck blind,  
 That domineering mistress of the soul!  
 Like him so strong by Delilah the fair?  
 Or is it Fear turns startled Reason back,  
 From looking down a precipice so steep?  
 'Tis dreadful; and the dread is wisely plac'd  
 By Nature, conscious of the make of man.  
 A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,  
 A flaming sword to guard the tree of life.  
 By that unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour,  
 The good man would repine; would suffer joys,  
 And burn impatient for his promis'd skies.  
 The bad on each punctilious pique of pride,  
 Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein,  
 Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,  
 And mar the schemes of Providence below.

What groan was that, Lorenzo?—Furies! rise;  
 And drown, in your less execrable yell,  
 Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,  
 On wing impetuous, a black sullen soul,  
 Blasted, from hell, with horrid lust of death.  
 Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,  
 So call'd, so thought—And then he fled the field.  
 Less base the fear of death, than fear of life.  
 O Britain, infamous for suicide!  
 An island in thy manners! far disjoin'd  
 From the whole world of rationals beside!  
 In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,  
 Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.

But thou be shock'd, while I detect the cause  
 Of self-assault, expose the monster's birth,  
 And bid Abhorrence hiss it round the world.  
 Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant fun:



The sun is innocent, thy clime absolv'd:  
Immoral climes kind Nature never made.  
The cause I sing in Eden might prevail,  
And proves, It is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man (let man in homage bow,  
Who names his soul) a native of the skies!  
High-born, and free, her freedom should maintain,  
Unfold, unmortgag'd for earth's little bribes.  
Th' illustrious stranger in this foreign land,  
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity,  
Studious of home, and ardent to return,  
Of earth suspicious, earth's enchanted cup  
With cool reserve light-touching, should indulge,  
On immortality, her godlike taste; [there.  
There take large draughts; make her chief banquet

But some reject this sustenance divine;  
To beggarly vile appetites descend;  
Ask alms of earth, for guests that came from heaven!  
Sink into slaves; and sell for present hire,  
Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate)  
Their native freedom to the prince who sways  
This nether world. And when his payments fail,  
When his foul basket gorges them no more;  
Or their pall'd palates lothe the basket full;  
Are instantly, with wild dæmoniac rage,  
For breaking all the chains of Providence,  
And bursting their confinement; tho' fast barr'd  
By laws divine and human; guarded strong  
With horrors doubled to defend the pass,  
The blackest, nature, or dire guilt, can raise;  
And moated round with fathomless destruction,  
Sure to receive, and whelm them in their fall.

Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown;  
Or worse, o'erlook'd; o'erlook'd by magistrates,  
Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed  
Is madness; but the madness of the heart.  
And what is that? our utmost bound of guilt.  
A sensual unreflecting life, is big

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With monstrous births, and suicide, to crown  
 The black infernal brood. The bold to break  
 Heav'n's law supreme, and desperately rush  
 Thro' sacred Nature's murder, on their own,  
 Because they never think of death, they die.  
 'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,  
 At once to shun and meditate his end.  
 When by the bed of languishment we sit,  
 (The seat of wisdom! if our choice, not fate)  
 Or, o'er our dying friends, in anguish hang,  
 Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,  
 Number their moments, and, in ev'ry clock,  
 Start at the voice of an Eternity;  
 See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift  
 An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,  
 Then sink again, and quiver unto death,  
 That most pathetic herald of our own;  
 How read we such sad scenes? As sent to man  
 In perfect vengeance? No, in pity sent,  
 To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,  
 Indelible, Death's image on his heart;  
 Bleeding for others, trembling for himself.  
 We bleed, we tremble; we forget, we smile.  
 The mind turns fool, before the cheek is dry.  
 Our quick-returning folly cancels all;  
 As the tide rushing razes what is writ  
 In yielding sands, and smoothes the letter'd shore.

Lorenzo! hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh?  
 Or study'd the philosophy of tears?  
 (A science, yet, unlectur'd in our schools!)  
 Hast thou descended deep into the breast,  
 And seen their source? if not, descend with me,  
 And trace these briny riv'lets to their springs.  
 Our fun'ral tears from diff'rent causes rise;  
 As if from separate cisterns in the soul,  
 Of various kinds, they flow. From tender hearts,  
 By soft contagion call'd, some burst at once,  
 And stream obsequious to the leading eye.

NIGHT THE FIFTH. 101

Some ask more time, by curious art distill'd.  
 Some hearts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,  
 Struck by the magic of the public eye,  
 Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out amain.  
 Some weep, to share the fame of the deceas'd,  
 So high in merit, and to them so dear.  
 They dwell on praises, which they think they share;  
 And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.  
 Some mourn, in proof that some think they could love;  
 They weep not to relieve their grief, but shew.  
 Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,  
 As conscious all their love is in arrear.  
 Some mischievously weep; not unappris'd,  
 Tears sometimes aid the conquest of an eye.  
 With what address the soft Ephesians draw  
 Their sable net-work o'er entangled hearts!  
 As seen thro' crystal, how their roses glow,  
 While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek!  
 Of her's not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,  
 Carousing gems, herself dissolv'd in love.  
 Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,  
 And celebrate, like CHARLES, their own decase.  
 By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,  
 Because a decent veil conceals their joy.  
 Some weep in earnest; and yet weep in vain;  
 As deep in indiscretion, as in woe.  
 Passion, blind Passion! impotently pours  
 Tears, that deserve more tears; while reason sleeps,  
 Or gazes like an idiot unconcern'd;  
 Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;  
 Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.  
 Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,  
 That noble gift! that privilege of man!  
 From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy.  
 But these are barren of that birth divine:  
 They weep impetuous, as the summer-storm,  
 And full as short! the cruel grief soon tam'd,  
 They make a pastime of the stingless tale;

Far as the deep-resounding knell, they spread  
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more.  
No grain of wisdom pays them for their wo.

Half round the globe, the tears pump'd up by Death  
Are spent in wat'ring vanities of life ;  
In making Folly flourish still more fair.

When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,  
Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust ;  
Instead of learning, there, her true support,  
Tho' there thrown down, her true support to learn,  
Without Heav'n's aid impatient to be blest'd,  
She crawls to the next shrub, or bramble vile,  
Tho' from the stately cedar's arms she fell;  
With stale, foresworn embraces, clings anew,  
The stranger weds, and blossoms as before  
In all the fruitless fopperies of life :

Presents her weed, well-fancy'd, at the ball,  
And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.

So wept Aurelia, till the destin'd youth  
Stept in, with his receipt for making smiles,  
And blanching fables into bridal bloom.

So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate ;

Who gave that angel-boy, on whom he doats ;  
And dy'd to give him, orphan'd in his birth!  
Not such, Narcissa! my distress for thee.

I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb

'To sacrifice to wisdom.—What wast thou ?

“ Young, gay, and fortunate!” Each yields a theme.

I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe ;

(Heav'n knows I labour with severer still!)

I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.

A soul without reflection, like a pile

Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And first thy youth. What says it to grey hairs ?

Narcissa, I'm become thy pupil now——

Early, bright, transient, chaste as morning dew,

She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to heav'n.

Time on this head has snow'd; yet still 'tis borne

Aloft ; nor thinks but on another's grave.  
 Cover'd with shame I speak it, Age severe  
 Old worn-out Vice sets down for Virtue fair ;  
 With graceless gravity, chastising youth,  
 That youth chafis'd surpassing in a fault,  
 Father of all, forgetfulness of death :  
 As if, like objects pressing on the sight,  
 Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen :  
 Or, that life's loan Time ripen'd into right ;  
 And men might plead prescription from the grave ;  
 Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.  
 Deathless ? far from it ! such are dead already ;  
 Their hearts are bury'd, and the world their grave.

Tell me, some god ! my guardian angel ! tell  
 What thus insatuates ? what enchantment plants  
 The phantom of an age 'twixt us, and death  
 Already at the door ? He knocks ; we hear him,  
 And yet we will not hear. What mail defends  
 Our untouch'd hearts ? what miracle turns off  
 The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers  
 Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd ?  
 We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs  
 Around us falling ; wounded oft ourselves ;  
 Tho' bleeding with our wounds, immortal still !  
 We see Time's furrows on another's brow,  
 And Death entrench'd, preparing his assault ;  
 How few themselves, in that just mirror, see !  
 Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong !  
 There Death is certain ; doubtful here : he must,  
 And soon ; we may, within an age, expire.  
 Tho' grey our heads, our thoughts and aims are green ;  
 Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent,  
 Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve.

Absurd longevity ! more, more, it cries :  
 More life, more wealth, more trash of ev'ry kind.  
 And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails ?  
 Object, and appetite, must club for joy ;  
 Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow,



Baubles, I mean, that strike us from without,  
While Nature is relaxing ev'ry string?  
Ask thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.  
Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,  
Has nothing of more manly to succeed?  
Contract the taste immortal; learn, ev'n now,  
To relish what alone subsists hereafter:  
Divine, or none, henceforth your joys for ever.  
Of age the glory is, to wish to die.  
That wish is praise and promise; it applauds  
Past life, and promises our future bliss.  
What weakness see not children in their fires!  
Grand-climacterical absurdities!  
Grey-hair'd authority, to faults of youth,  
How shocking! It makes folly thrice a fool;  
And our first childhood might our last despise.  
Peace and esteem is all that age can hope.  
Nothing but Wisdom gives the first; the last,  
Nothing but the repute of being wise.  
Folly bars both; our age is quite undone.

What folly can be ranker? Like our shadows,  
Our wishes lengthen, as our sun declines.  
No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave.  
Our hearts should leave the world, before the knell  
Calls for our carcases to mend the soil.  
Enough to live in tempest, die in port;  
Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat  
Defects of judgement, and the will's subdue;  
Walk thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore  
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon;  
And put good-works on board; and wait the wind  
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown;  
If unconsider'd too, a dreadful scene!

All should be prophets to themselves; foresee  
Their future fate; their future fate foretaste.  
This art would waste the bitterness of death.  
The thought of death alone, the fear destroys.  
A disaffection to that precious thought



Is more than midnight darkness on the soul,  
Which sleeps beneath it, on a precipice,  
Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, Lorenzo, why so warmly press'd,  
By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,  
The thought of death? That thought is the machine,  
The grand machine! that heaves us from the dust,  
And rears us into men. That thought ply'd home  
Will soon reduce the ghastly precipice  
O'er-hanging hell, will soften the descent,  
And gently slope our passage to the grave;  
How warmly to be wish'd! What heart of flesh  
Would trifle with tremendous? dare extremes?  
Yawn o'er the fate of infinite? What hand,  
Beyond the blackest brand of Censure bold,  
(To speak a language too well known to thee)  
Would at a moment give its all to chance,  
And stamp the die for an eternity?

Aid me, Narcissa! aid me to keep pace  
With destiny; and ere her scissars cut  
My thread of life, to break this tougher thread  
Of moral death, that ties me to the world.  
Sting thou my slumb'ring reason to send forth  
A thought of observation on the foe;  
To sally, and survey the rapid march  
Of his ten thousand messengers to man;  
Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all.  
All accident apart, by Nature sign'd,  
My warrant is gone out, tho' dormant yet;  
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

Must I then forward only look for death!  
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.  
Man is a self-survivor ev'ry year.  
Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.  
Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey.  
My youth, my noon-tide, his; my yesterday;  
The bold invader shares the present hour.  
Each moment on the former shuts the grave.

While man is growing, life is in decrease;  
And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.  
Our birth is nothing but our death begun;  
As tapers waste, that instant they take fire.

Shall we then fear, lest that should come to pass,  
Which comes to pass each moment of our lives?  
If fear we must, let that death turn us pale,  
Which murders strength and ardour; what remains  
Should rather call on death, than dread his call.  
Ye partners of my fault, and my decline!  
Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's knell  
(Rude visitant!) knocks hard at your dull sense,  
And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear!  
Be death your theme, in every place and hour;  
Nor longer want, ye monumental fires!  
A brother-tomb to tell you you shall die.  
That death you dread (so great is Nature's skill)  
Know, you shall court, before you shall enjoy.

But you are learn'd; in volumes deep you sit;  
In wisdom shallow: pompous ignorance!  
Would you be still more learned than the learn'd?  
Learn well to know how much need not be known,  
And what that knowledge which impairs your sense.  
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,  
Unhedg'd, lies open in life's common field;  
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.  
You scorn what lies before you in the page  
Of Nature, and Experience, moral truth;  
Of indispensable, eternal fruit;  
Fruit, on which mortals feeding turn to gods:  
And dive in Science for distinguish'd names,  
Dishonest fomentation of your pride;  
Sinking in virtue, as you rise in fame.  
Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords  
Light, but not heat; it leaves you undevout,  
Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.  
Awake, ye curious indagators! fond  
Of knowing all, but what avails you known.

If you would learn Death's character, attend.  
 All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,  
 All dies of fortune, and all dates of age,  
 Together shook in his impartial urn,  
 Come forth at random : or if choice is made.  
 The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults  
 All bold conjecture, and fond hopes of man,  
 What countless multitudes not only leave,  
 But deeply disappoint us by their deaths!  
 Tho' great our sorrow, greater our surprise.

Like other tyrants, Death delights to smite,  
 What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of pow'r,  
 And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme,  
 To bid the wretch survive the fortunate ;  
 The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud ;  
 And weeping fathers build their children's tomb.  
 Me thine, Narcissa!—What tho' short thy date?  
 Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.  
 That life is long, which answers life's great end.  
 The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name ;  
 The man of wisdom is the man of years.  
 In hoary youth Methuselems may die ;  
 O how misdated on their flatt'ring tombs!

Narcissa's youth has lectur'd me thus far :  
 And can her gaiety give counsel too?  
 That, like the Jews' fam'd oracle of gems,  
 Sparkles instruction ; such as throws new light,  
 And opens more the character of Death ;  
 Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! This thy vaunt :  
 " Give Death his due, the wretched and the old ;  
 " Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave :  
 " Let him not violate kind Nature's laws ;  
 " But own man born to live, as well as die."  
 Wretched and old thou giv'st him ; young and gay  
 He takes ; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.  
 What if I prove, " The farthest from the fear,  
 " Are often nearest to the stroke of Fate?"  
 All, more than common, menaces an end.

A blaze betokens brevity of life :

As if bright embers should emit a flame,

Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye,

And made youth younger, and taught life to live.

As Nature's opposites wage endless war,

For this offence, as treason to the deep

Inviolable stupor of his reign,

Where lust, and turbulent ambition, sleep,

Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,

More life is still more odious; and, reduc'd

By conquest, aggrandizes more his power.

But wherefore aggrandiz'd? by Heav'n's decree,

To plant the soul on her eternal guard,

In awful expectation of our end.

Thus runs Death's dread commission: "Strike, but so

"As most alarms the living by the dead."

Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,

And cruel sport with man's securities.

Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;

And, where least fear'd, there conquests triumphs most.

This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are his arts to lay our fears asleep?

Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up

In deep dissimulation's darkest night.

Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,

Who travel under cover, Death assumes

The name and look of Life, and dwells among us.

He takes all shapes that serve his black designs;

Tho' master of a wider empire far

Than that o'er which the Roman eagle flew;

Like Nero, he's a fidler, charioteer,

Or drives his Phaeton, in female guise;

Quite unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath,

His disarray'd oblation he devours.

He most affects the forms least like himself,

His slender self. Hence burly corpulence

Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.

Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,

Or ambush in a smile; or wanton dive  
 In dimples deep; love's eddies, which draw in  
 Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.  
 Such, on Narcissa's couch, he loiter'd long,  
 Unknown; and, when detected, still was seen  
 To smile: such peace has innocence in death!

Most happy they! whom least his arts deceive.  
 One eye on death, and one full fix'd on heaven,  
 Becomes a mortal, and immortal man.  
 Long on his wiles a piqu'd and jealous spy,  
 I've seen, or dream'd I saw, the tyrant dress;  
 Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles.  
 Say, muse, for thou remember'st, call it back,  
 And shew Lorenzo the surprising scene;  
 If 'twas a dream his genius can explain.

'Twas in a circle of the gay I stood.  
 Death would have enter'd; Nature push'd him back;  
 Supported by a doctor of renown,  
 His point he gain'd. Then artfully dismiss'd  
 The sage; for Death design'd to be conceal'd.  
 He gave an old vivacious usurer  
 His meagre aspect and his naked bones;  
 In gratitude for plumping up his prey,  
 A pamper'd spendthrift, whose fantastic air,  
 Well fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow,  
 He took in change, and underneath the pride  
 Of costly linen tuck'd his filthy shroud.  
 His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane;  
 And hid his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equipp'd,  
 Out-fallies on adventures. Ask you where?  
 Where is he not? For his peculiar haunts,  
 Let this suffice: sure as night follows day,  
 Death treads in Pleasure's footsteps round the world,  
 When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason shuns.  
 When, against Reason, Riot shuts the door,  
 And Gaiety supplies the place of Sense,  
 Then, foremost at the banquet, and the ball,



Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly dye;  
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.  
Gayly carousing to his gay compeers,  
Inly he laughs, to see them laugh at him  
As absent far: and when the revel burns,  
When fear is banish'd, and triumphant thought,  
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,  
Against him turns the key, and bids him sup  
With their progenitors—he drops his mask;  
Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,  
From his black masque of nitre, touch'd by fire,  
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.  
And is not this triumphant treachery,  
And more than simple conquest, in the fiend?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul  
In soft security, because unknown  
Which moment is commission'd to destroy?  
In Death's uncertainty thy danger lyes.  
Is Death uncertain? therefore be thou fix'd;  
Fix'd as a centinel, all eye, all ear,  
All expectation of the coming foe.  
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear;  
Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,  
And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong:  
Thus give each day the merit and renown  
Of dying well; tho' doom'd but once to die.  
Nor let life's period hidden (as from most)  
Hide too from thee the precious use of life.

Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate;  
Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid.  
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,  
Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die:  
Tho' Fortune too (our third and final theme)  
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,  
And ev'ry glittering gewgaw, on her sight,  
To dazzle, and debauch it from its mark.  
Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man;

NIGHT THE FIFTH. 111

And ev'ry thought that misses it, is blind.  
 Fortune, with Youth and Gaiety, conspir'd  
 To weave a triple wreath of happiness,  
 (If happiness on earth) to crown her brow.  
 And could Death charge thro' such a shining shield?

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear.  
 As if to damp our elevated aims,  
 And strongly preach humility to man.  
 O how portentous is prosperity!  
 How, comet-like, it threatens, while it shines!  
 Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition  
 To cull his victims from the fairest fold,  
 And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.  
 When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er  
 With recent honour, bloom'd with ev'ry bliss,  
 Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,  
 The gaudy centre, of the public eye;  
 When Fortune thus has toss'd her child in air,  
 Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state,  
 How often have I seen him drop at once,  
 Our morning's envy! and our ev'ning's sigh!  
 As if her bounties were the signal given,  
 The flow'ry wreath to mark the sacrifice,  
 And call Death's arrows on the destin'd prey.

High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate;  
 Ask you for what? to give his war on man  
 The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;  
 Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.  
 And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime  
 Of life? to hang his airy nest on high,  
 On the slight timber of the topmost bough,  
 Rock'd at each breeze, and menacing a fall?  
 Granting grim Death at equal distance there;  
 Yet peace begins just where ambition ends.  
 What makes man wretched? Happiness deny'd?  
 Lorenzo! no: 'tis happiness disdain'd.  
 She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile;  
 And calls herself Content, a homely name!

## 112 THE COMPLAINT:

Our flame is transport, and content our scorn.  
 Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,  
 And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead;  
 A tempest, to warm transport near of kin.  
 Unknowing what our mortal state admits,  
 Life's modest joys we ruin, while we raise;  
 And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace;  
 Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth!  
 Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate!  
 As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up  
 Thy wholesome fears; now, drawn in contrast, see  
 Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.  
 See, high in air, the sportive goddess hangs,  
 Unlocks her casket, spreads her glitt'ring ware,  
 And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad  
 Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.  
 All rush-rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends;  
 Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,  
 Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,  
 (Still more ador'd), to snatch the golden show'r.

Gold glitters most, where virtue shines no more;  
 As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.  
 O what a precious pack of votaries  
 Unkennell'd from the prisons, and the stews,  
 Pour in, as op'ning in their idol's praise?  
 All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,  
 And wide-expanding their voracious jaws,  
 Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,  
 Untasted, through mad appetite for more;  
 Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and rav'nous still.  
 Sagacious all, to trace the smallest game,  
 And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest'd chance!)  
 Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they laugh, they fly,  
 O'er just, o'er sacred, all forbidden ground,  
 Drunk with the burning scent of place or pow'r,  
 Staunch to the foot of lucre, till they die.

Or, if for men you take them, as I mark

Their manners, thou their various fates survey.  
 With aim mis-measur'd, and impetuous speed,  
 Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off,  
 Thro' fury to possess it: some succeed,  
 But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.  
 From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,  
 And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.  
 To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off,  
 Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.  
 Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad,  
 Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.  
 Together some (unhappy rivals!) seize,  
 And rend abundance into poverty;  
 Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles:  
 Smiles too the goddess; but smiles most at those  
 (Just victims of exorbitant desire!)  
 Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd  
 Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.  
 Fortune is famous for her numbers slain,  
 The number small which happiness can bear.  
 Tho' various for a while their fates, at last  
 One curse involves them all: at Death's approach,  
 All read their riches backward into loss,  
 And mourn in just proportion to their store.

And Death's approach (if orthodox my song)  
 Is hasten'd by the lure of Fortune's smiles.  
 And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?  
 And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin?  
 Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;  
 A blow, which, while it executes, alarms;  
 And startles thousands with a single fall.  
 As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,  
 Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade,  
 The sun's defiance, and the flock's defence;  
 By the strong strokes of lab'ring hinds subdu'd,  
 Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height  
 In cumb'rous ruin, thunders to the ground;  
 The conscious forest trembles at the shock;

#### 114 THE COMPLAINT:

And hill, and stream, and distant dale, resound.

These high-aim'd darts of Death, and these alone,  
Should I collect, my quiver would be full.

A quiver, which, suspended in mid air,  
Or near Heav'n's Archer, in the zodiac, hung,  
(So could it be) should draw the public eye,  
The gaze and contemplation of mankind!

A constellation awful, yet benign,  
To guide the gay thro' life's tempestuous wave;  
Nor suffer them to strike the common rock,  
"From greater danger to grow more secure,  
"And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate."

Lyfander, happy past the common lot,  
Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.  
He woo'd the fair Aspasia; she was kind:  
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were blest'd.  
All who knew, envy'd; yet in envy lov'd:  
Can Fancy form more finish'd happiness?

Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome  
Rose on the sounding beach. The glitt'ring spires  
Float in the wave, and break against the shore:  
So break those glitt'ring shadows, human joys.  
The faithless morning smil'd: he takes his leave,  
To re-embrace in ecstasies at eve.

The rising storm forbids. The news arrives:  
Unfold, she saw it in her servant's eye.  
She felt it seen, (her heart was apt to feel;)  
And, drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,  
In suffocating sorrows, shares his tomb.

Now, round the sumptuous bridal monument,  
The guilty billows innocently roar;  
And the rough sailor passing drops a tear.  
A tear!—can tears suffice?—but not for me.  
How vain our efforts! and our arts, how vain!  
The distant train of thought I took, to shun,  
Has thrown me on my fate—These dy'd together;  
Happy in ruin! undivorc'd by death!

Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace—



NIGHT THE FIFTH. 115

Narcissa! pity bleeds at thought of thee.  
Yet thou wast only near me; not myself.  
Survive myself?—That cures all other wo.  
Narcissa lives; Philander is forgot.  
O the soft commerce! O the tender ties,  
Close-twisted with the fibres of the heart!  
Which broken, break them; and drain off the soul  
Of human joy; and make it pain to live.—  
And is it then to live? when such friends part,  
'Tis the survivor dies—My heart, no more.

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THE  
COMPLAINT.

NIGHT the SIXTH.

THE  
INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

IN TWO PARTS.  
CONTAINING  
THE NATURE, PROOF,  
AND  
IMPORTANCE  
OF  
IMMORTALITY.

PART THE FIRST:

Where, among other things, GLORY and RICHES  
are particularly considered.

Humbly inscribed to the Right Honourable

HENRY PELHAM,

First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, and  
Chancellor of the Exchequer.

THE  
COMPLAINANT.

IN TWO PARTS.

THE FIRST PART.

CONTAINING

THE NATURE, PROOF,

AND

REMEDY.

IN TWO PARTS.

THE SECOND PART.

CONTAINING

THE REMEDY.

BY

HENRY FARMER.

OF THE BAR AT THE MIDDLE TEMPLE.

LONDON: Printed by J. B. G. & Co. 1788.

## P R E F A C E.

**F**EW ages have been deeper in dispute about religion than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, Is man immortal, or is he not? If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, Truth, Reason, Religion, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shewn) mere empty sounds, without any meaning in them. But if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eternal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablished, or unawakened, in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity; how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it.

Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those who have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest, that souls should not survive! The heathen world confessed, that they rather hoped than firmly believed immortality; and how many heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel: but by how many is the gospel rejected or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded, that most, if not all, our Infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to



keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom. And I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality, are not far from being Christians. For it is hard to conceive, that a man fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly, and impartially, inquire after the surest means of escaping the one, and securing the other. And of such an earnest and impartial inquiry, I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments, which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such as I am satisfied will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bottoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall, here, occur, which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments, in this, of all points, the most important. For, as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed, for this reason only, viz. because, where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable. And, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

## NIGHT the SIXTH.

SHE \* (for I know not yet her name in heaven)  
 Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene;  
 Nor sudden like Philander. What avail?  
 This seeming mitigation but enflames;  
 This fancy'd medicine heightens the disease.  
 The longer known, the closer still she grew;  
 And gradual parting is a gradual death.  
 'Tis the grim tyrant's engine, which extorts,  
 By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,  
 From hardest hearts, confession of distress.  
 O the long dark approach thro' years of pain,  
 Death's gall'ry! (might I dare to call it so)  
 With dismal doubt, and fable terror, hung;  
 Sick Hope's pale lamp, its only glimm'ring ray:  
 There fate my melancholy walk ordain'd,  
 Forbid self-love itself to flatter there.  
 How oft I gaz'd, prophetically sad!  
 How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles!  
 In smiles she sunk her grief, to lessen mine;  
 She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain.  
 Like pow'rful armies trenching at a town,  
 By slow, and silent, but resistless sap,  
 In his pale progress gently gaining ground,  
 Death urg'd his deadly siege: in spite of art,  
 Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends  
 To succour frail humanity. Ye stars!  
 (Not now first made familiar to my sight)  
 And thou, O moon! bear witness; many a night  
 He tore the pillow from beneath my head,  
 Ty'd down my sore attention to the shock,  
 By ceaseless depredations on a life  
 Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post

VOL. III.

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\* Referring to Night the First.

Of observation, darker ev'ry hour!  
 Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,  
 And pointed at eternity below;  
 When my soul shudder'd at futurity;  
 When, on a moment's point, th' important dye  
 Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,  
 And turn'd up life; my title to more wo.

But why more wo? more comfort let it be.  
 Nothing is dead, but that which wish'd to die;  
 Nothing is dead, but wretchedness and pain;  
 Nothing is dead, but what incumber'd, gall'd,  
 Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from real life.  
 Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wife?  
 Too dark the sun to see it; highest stars  
 Too low to reach it; Death, great Death alone,  
 O'er stars and sun triumphant, lands us there.  
 Nor dreadful our transition; tho' the mind,  
 An artist at creating self-alarms,  
 Rich in expedients for inquietude,  
 Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take  
 Death's portrait true? the tyrant never sat.  
 Our sketch, all random strokes, conjecture all;  
 Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.  
 Death, and his image rising in the brain,  
 Bear faint resemblance; never are alike;  
 Fear shakes the pencil, Fancy loves excess,  
 Dark ignorance is lavish of her shades;  
 And these the formidable picture draw.

But grant the worst; 'tis past; new prospects rise;  
 And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.  
 Far other views our contemplation claim;  
 Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;  
 Views that suspend our agonies in death.  
 Wrapt up in thought of immortality,  
 Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought!  
 Long life might lapse, age unperceiv'd come on,  
 And find the soul unfated with her theme.  
 Its Nature, Proof, Importance, fire my song,

NIGHT THE SIXTH. 125

O that my song could emulate my soul!  
 Like her, immortal. No!—the soul disdains  
 A mark so mean ; far nobler hope inflames ;  
 If endless ages can outweigh an hour,  
 Let not the laurel, but the palm, inspire.  
 Thy nature, immortality! who knows?  
 And yet who knows it not? It is but life  
 In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,  
 And spun for ever; dipt by cruel fate  
 In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle here!  
 How short our correspondence with the sun!  
 And, while it lasts, inglorious! our best deeds  
 How wanting in their weight! our highest joys  
 Small cordials to support us in our pain,  
 And give us strength to suffer. But how great  
 To mingle int'rests, converse, amities,  
 With all the sons of reason, scatter'd wide  
 Through habitable space, where-ever born,  
 Howe'er endow'd! to live free citizens  
 Of universal nature! to lay hold,  
 By more than feeble faith, on the Supreme!  
 To call Heav'n's rich unfathomable mines  
 (Mines which support archangels in their state)  
 Our own! to rise in science, as in bliss,  
 Initiate in the secrets of the skies!  
 To read creation ; read its mighty plan  
 In the bare bosom of the Deity!  
 The plan, and execution, to collate!  
 To see, before each glance of piercing thought,  
 All cloud, all shadow, blown remote; and leave  
 No mystery—but that of love divine,  
 Which lifts us on the Seraph's flaming wing,  
 From earth's Aceldama, this field of blood,  
 Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,  
 From darkness, and from dust, to such a scene!  
 Love's element! true joy's illustrious home!  
 From earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair!  
 What exquisite vicissitude of fate!

Blest absolution of our blackest hour!

Lorenzo! these are thoughts that make man man,  
 The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.  
 How great (while yet we tread the kindred clod,  
 And ev'ry moment fear to sink beneath  
 The clod we tread, soon trodden by our sons)  
 How great, in the wild whirl of Time's pursuits  
 To stop and pause, involv'd in high presage,  
 Though the long vista of a thousand years,  
 To stand contemplating our distant selves,  
 As in a magnifying mirror seen,  
 Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine!  
 To prophecy our own futurities!  
 To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends!  
 To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys  
 As far beyond conception as desert,  
 Ourselves th' astonish'd talkers and the tale!

Lorenzo! swells thy bosom at the thought?  
 The swell becomes thee: 'tis an honest pride.  
 Revere thyself; and yet thyself despise.  
 His nature no man can o'er-rate; and none  
 Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed;  
 Nor there be modest, where thou should'st be proud;  
 That almost universal error shun.  
 How just our pride, when we behold those heights!  
 Not those Ambition paints in air, but those  
 Reason points out, and ardent Virtue gains;  
 And angels emulate: our pride how just!  
 When mount we? when these shackles cast? when quit  
 The cell of the creation? this small nest,  
 Stuck in a corner of the universe,  
 Wrapt up in fleecy cloud, and fine-spun air?  
 Fine spun to sense, but gross and feculent  
 To souls celestial; souls ordain'd to breathe  
 Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky;  
 Greatly triumphant on Time's farther shore,  
 Where virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears:  
 While Pomp imperial begs an alms of peace.



In empire high, or in proud science deep,  
 Ye born of earth! on what can ye confer,  
 With half the dignity, with half the gain,  
 The gulf, the glow of rational delight,  
 As on this theme, which angels praise, and share?  
 Man's fates and favours are a theme in heaven.

What wretched repetition cloy us here!  
 What periodic potions for the sick!  
 Distemper'd bodies! and distemper'd minds!  
 In an eternity, what scenes shall strike!  
 Adventures thicken! novelties surprise!  
 What webs of wonder shall unravel, there!  
 What full day pour on all the paths of heaven,  
 And light th' Almighty's footsteps in the deep!  
 How shall the blessed day of our discharge  
 Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of fate,  
 And straighten its inextricable maze!

If inextinguishable thirst in man  
 To know; how rich, how full, our banquet there!  
 There, not the moral world alone unfolds;  
 The world material, lately seen in shades,  
 And in those shades by fragments only seen,  
 And seen those fragments by the lab'ring eye,  
 Unbroken, then, illustrious, and entire,  
 Its ample sphere, its universal frame,  
 In full dimensions, swells to the survey;  
 And enters, at one glance, the ravish'd sight.  
 From some superior point (where, who can tell?  
 Suffice it, 'tis a point where gods reside)  
 How shall the stranger man's illumin'd eye,  
 In the vast ocean of unbounded space,  
 Behold an infinite of floating worlds  
 Divide the chrystal waves of ether pure  
 In endless voyage, without port? the least  
 Of these disseminated orbs, how great!  
 Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,  
 Huge, as Leviathan, to that small race,  
 Those twinkling multitudes of little life,

## 126 THE COMPLAINT:

He swallows unperceiv'd! Stupendous these?  
 Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?  
 As particles, as atoms, ill-perceiv'd;  
 As circulating globules in our veins;  
 So vast the plan. Fecundity divine!  
 Exub'rant Source! perhaps, I wrong thee still.

If admiration is a source of joy,  
 What transport hence? Yet this the least in heaven.  
 What this to that illustrious robe He wears,  
 Who tofs'd this mass of wonders from his hand,  
 A specimen, an earnest of his pow'r?  
 'Tis to that glory, whence all glory flows,  
 As the mead's meanest flow'ret to the sun,  
 Which gave it birth. But what, this fun of heaven?  
 This bliss supreme of the supremely blest'd?  
 Death, only death, the question can resolve.  
 By death, cheap-bought th' ideas of our joy;  
 The bare ideas! solid happiness  
 So distant from its shadow chac'd below.

And chace we still the phantom thro' the fire,  
 O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?  
 And toil we still for sublunary pay?  
 Defy the dangers of the field, and flood,  
 Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,  
 Our more than vitals spin (if no regard  
 To great futurity) in curious webs  
 Of subtle thought, and exquisite design,  
 (Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly!  
 The momentary buz of vain renown!  
 A name, a mortal immortality!

Or (meaner still!) instead of grasping air,  
 For fordid lucre plunge we in the mire?  
 Drudge, sweat, thro' ev'ry shame, for ev'ry gain,  
 For vile contaminating trash; throw up  
 Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man?  
 And deify the dirt, matur'd to gold?  
 Ambition, Av'rice; the two dæmons these,  
 Which goad thro' ev'ry slough our human herd,

Hard-travel'd from the cradle to the grave.  
 How low the wretches stoop! how steep they climb!  
 'These dæmons burn mankind; but most possess  
 Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in time to hide eternity?  
 And why not in an atom on the shore,  
 To cover ocean? or a mote the sun?  
 Glory, and wealth! have they this blinding pow'r?  
 What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind?  
 Would it surprize thee? Be thou then surpris'd;  
 Thou neither know'st: their nature learn from me.

Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,  
 What close connection ties them to my theme.  
 First, what is true ambition? The pursuit  
 Of glory, nothing less than man can share.  
 Were they as vain, as gaudy-minded man,  
 As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,  
 Their arts and conquests animals might boast,  
 And claim their laurel crowns as well as we;  
 But not celestial. Here we stand alone;  
 As in our form, distinct, pre-eminent;  
 If prone in thought, our stature is our shame,  
 And man should blush his forehead meets the skies.  
 The visible and present are for brutes,  
 A slender portion! and a narrow bound!  
 These reason, with an energy divine,  
 O'erleaps; and claims the future and unseen;  
 The vast unseen! the future fathomless!  
 When the great soul buoys up to this high point,  
 Leaving gross nature's sediments below;  
 Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits  
 The sage and hero of the fields and woods,  
 Asserts his rank, and rises into man.  
 This is ambition: this is human fire.

Can parts or place (two bold pretenders!) make  
 Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng!

Genius and art, ambition's boasted wings,  
 Our boast but ill deserve. A feeble aid!

128 THE COMPLAINT:

Dedalian enginery! if these alone  
 Assist our flight, fame's flight is glory's fall.  
 Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,  
 Our height is but the gibbet of our name.  
 A celebrated wretch when I behold,  
 When I behold a genius bright, and base,  
 Of tow'ring talents, and terrestrial aims;  
 Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,  
 The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,  
 With rubbish mixt, and glitt'ring in the dust.  
 Struck at the splendid, melancholy sight,  
 At once compassion soft, and envy, rise—  
 But wherefore envy? Talents angel-bright,  
 If wanting worth, are shining instruments  
 In false ambition's hand, to finish faults  
 Illustrious, and give infamy renown.

Great ill is an atchievement of great pow'rs.  
 Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.  
 Reason the means, affections chuse our end;  
 Means have no merit, if our end amiss.  
 If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain;  
 What is a Pelham's head, to Pelham's heart?  
 Hearts are proprietors of all applause.  
 Right ends, and means, make wisdom; worldly-wise  
 Is but half-witted, at its highest praise.

Let genius then despair to make thee great;  
 Nor flatter station: what is station high?  
 'Tis a proud mendicant; it boasts, and begs;  
 It begs an alms of homage from the throng,  
 And oft the throng denies its charity.  
 Monarchs, and ministers, are awful names;  
 Whoever wear them, challenge our devoir.  
 Religion, public order, both exact  
 External homage, and a supple knee,  
 To beings pompously set up, to serve  
 The meanest slave: all more is merit's due,  
 Her sacred and inviolable right;  
 Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.

Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth ;  
 Nor ever fail of their allegiance there.  
 Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,  
 And vote the mantle into majesty.  
 Let the small savage boast his silver fur ;  
 His royal robe unborrowed, and unbought,  
 His own, descending fairly from his fires.  
 Shall man be proud to wear his livery,  
 And souls in ermin scorn a soul without ?  
 Can place or lessen us, or aggrandize ?  
 Pygmies are pygmies still, tho' perch'd on Alps ;  
 And pyramids are pyramids in vales.  
 Each man makes his own stature, builds himself :  
 Virtue alone out-builds the pyramids ;  
 Her monuments shall last, when Egypt's fall.  
 Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause ?  
 The cause is lodg'd in immortality.  
 Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for power ;  
 What station charms thee ? I'll install thee there ;  
 'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before ?  
 Then thou before wast something less than man.  
 Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride ?  
 That treach'rous pride betrays thy dignity ;  
 That pride defames humanity, and calls  
 The being mean, which staffs or strings can raise.  
 That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,  
 From blindness bold, and tow'ring to the skies :  
 'Tis born of ignorance, which knows not man ;  
 An angel's second ; nor his second long.  
 A Nero quitting his imperial throne,  
 And courting glory from the tinkling string,  
 But faintly shadows an immortal soul,  
 With empire's self, to pride, or rapture, fir'd.  
 If nobler motives minister no cure,  
 Ev'n vanity forbids thee to be vain.  
 High worth is elevated place : 'tis more ;  
 It makes the post stand candidate for thee ;  
 Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man ;



Tho' no exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth;  
 And tho' it wears no ribband, 'tis renown;  
 Renown, that would not quit thee, tho' disgrac'd,  
 Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile.  
 Other ambition nature interdicts;  
 Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,  
 By pointing at his origin, and end;  
 Milk, and a swathe, at first, his whole demand;  
 His whole domain, at last, a turf, or stone;  
 To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls truly great dart forward on the wing  
 Of just ambition, to the grand result,  
 The curtain's fall: there, see the buskin'd chief  
 Unshod behind this momentary scene;  
 Reduc'd to his own stature, low or high,  
 As vice, or virtue, sinks him, or sublimes;  
 And laugh at this fantastic mummery,  
 This antic-prelude of grotesque events,  
 Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray  
 A littleness of soul, by worlds o'er-run,  
 And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice  
 To Christian pride! which had with horror shock'd  
 The darker Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

O thou most Christian enemy to peace!  
 Again in arms? again provoking fate?  
 That prince, and that alone, is truly great,  
 Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheathes;  
 On empire builds what empire far outweighs,  
 And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies.

Why this so rare? Because forgot of all  
 The day of death; that venerable day,  
 Which sits as judge; that day, which shall pronounce  
 On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.  
 Lorenzo, never shut thy thought against it;  
 Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room,  
 And give it audience in the cabinet.  
 That friend consulted, flatteries apart,  
 Will tell thee fair, if thou art great, or mean.

NIGHT THE SIXTH. 131

To doat on aught may leave us, or be left,  
Is that ambition? Then let flames descend,  
Point to the centre their inverted spires,  
And learn humiliation from a soul,  
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.  
Yet these are they the world pronounces wise;  
The world, which cancels nature's right and wrong,  
And casts new wisdom: ev'n the grave man lends  
His solemn face, to countenance the coin.  
Wisdom for parts, is madness for the whole.  
This stamps the paradox; and gives us leave  
To call the wisest weak; the richest, poor;  
The most ambitious, unambitious, mean;  
In triumph mean; and abject on a throne.  
Nothing can make it less than mad in man,  
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,  
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,  
But reaching Him, who gave her wings to fly.  
When blind ambition quite mistakes her road,  
And downward pores for that which shines above,  
Substantial happiness, and true renown;  
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,  
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;  
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition! pow'rful source of good and ill!  
Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds,  
When disengag'd from earth, with greater ease,  
And swifter flight, transports us to the skies:  
By toys entangled, or in guilt bemir'd,  
It turns a curse; it is our chain, and scourge,  
In this dark dungeon, where confin'd we ly,  
Close grated by the sordid bars of sense;  
All prospect of eternity shut out;  
And, but for execution, ne'er set free.

With error in ambition justly charg'd,  
Find we Lorenzo wiser in his wealth?  
What if thy rental I reform? and draw  
An inventory new, to set thee right?

132 THE COMPLAINT:

Where thy true treasure? Gold says, "Not in me;"  
 And, "Not in me," the diamond. Gold is poor;  
 India's insolvent: Seek it in thyself;  
 Seek in thy naked self, and find it there:  
 In being so descended, form'd, endow'd;  
 Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race!  
 Erect, immortal, rational, divine!  
 In senses which inherit earth and heav'ns;  
 Enjoy the various riches Nature yields;  
 Far nobler! give the riches they enjoy;  
 Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves;  
 Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright fire;  
 Take in, at once, the landscape of the world,  
 At a small inlet, which a grain might close,  
 And half create the wond'rous world they see.  
 Our senses, as our reason, are divine.  
 But for the magic organ's pow'rful charm,  
 Earth were a rude uncolour'd chaos still.  
 Objects are but th' occasion, ours th' exploit;  
 Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,  
 Which Nature's admirable picture draws,  
 And beautifies Creation's ample dome.  
 Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,  
 Man makes the matchless image, man admires.  
 Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,  
 Superior wonders in himself forgot,  
 His admiration waste on objects round,  
 When Heav'n makes him the soul of all he sees?  
 Absurd! not rare! so great, so mean is man.

What wealth in senses such as these! What wealth  
 In fancy fir'd to form a fairer scene  
 Than sense surveys! in mem'ry's firm record,  
 Which, should it perish, could this world recal,  
 From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!  
 In colours fresh, originally bright  
 Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!  
 What wealth in intellect, that sov'reign power!  
 Which Sense and Fancy summons to the bar;

Interrogates, approves, or reprehends ;  
 And from the mass those underlings import,  
 From their materials, sifted and refin'd,  
 And in Truth's balance accurately weigh'd,  
 Forms art, and science, government, and law ;  
 The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,  
 The vitals, and the grace, of civil life !  
 And, manners (sad exception !) set aside,  
 Strikes out, with master-hand, a copy fair  
 Of His idea, whose indulgent thought  
 Long, long ere chaos teem'd, plann'd human bliss.

What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range around,  
 Disdaining limit, or from place, or time ;  
 And hear at once, in thought extensive hear,  
 Th' almighty *fiat*, and the trumpet's sound !  
 Bold, on creation's outside walk, and view  
 What was, and is, and more than e'er shall be ;  
 Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,  
 Creations new in fancy's field to rise !  
 Souls that can grasp whate'er th' Almighty made,  
 And wander wild through things impossible !  
 What wealth, in faculties of endless growth,  
 In quenchless passions violent to crave,  
 In liberty to chuse, in power to reach,  
 And in duration (how thy riches rise !)  
 Duration to perpetuate—boundless bliss !

Ask you, what power resides in feeble man  
 That bliss to gain ? Is Virtue's, then, unknown ?  
 Virtue, our present peace, our future prize.  
 Man's unprecious, natural estate,  
 Improveable at will, in virtue lyes ;  
 Its tenure sure ; its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap ! for what ?  
 To breed new wants, and beggar us the more ;  
 Then, make a richer scramble for the throng ?  
 Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long  
 Almost by miracle, is tir'd with play,  
 Like rubbish from dislodging engines thrown,

134 THE COMPLAINT:

Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly;  
Fly diverse; fly to foreigners, to foes;  
New masters court, and call the former fool,  
(How justly!) for dependence on their stay.  
Wide scatter, first, our play-things; then, our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace?  
Learn, and lament, thy self-defeated scheme:  
Riches enable to be richer still;  
And, richer still, what mortal can resist?  
Thus wealth (a cruel taskmaster!) enjoins  
New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train?  
And murders peace, which taught it first to shine.  
The poor are half as wretched as the rich;  
Whose proud and painful privilege it is,  
At once to bear a double load of woe;  
To feel the stings of envy, and of want,  
Outrageous want! both Indies cannot cure.

A competence is vital to content.  
Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease;  
Sick, or incumber'd, is our happiness.  
A competence is all we can enjoy.  
O be content, where Heav'n can give no more!  
More, like a flash of water from a lock,  
Quickens our spirits' movement for an hour;  
But soon its force is spent, nor rise our joys  
Above our native temper's common stream.  
Hence disappointment lurks in ev'ry prize,  
As bees in flow'rs; and stings us with success.

The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns;  
Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.  
Much learning shews how little mortals know;  
Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy:  
At best, it babies us with endless toys,  
And keeps us children till we drop to dust.  
As monkeys at a mirror stand amaz'd,  
They fail to find what they so plainly see:  
Thus men, in shining riches, see the face  
Of happiness, nor know it is a shade;



But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,  
And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want!  
Who live to nature, rarely can be poor;  
Who lives to fancy, never can be rich.  
Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,  
In debt to fortune, trembles at her pow'r.  
The man of reason smiles at her and death.  
O what a patrimony, this! a being  
Of such inherent strength and majesty,  
Not worlds possess'd can raise it; worlds destroy'd  
Can't injure; which holds on its glorious course,  
When thine, O Nature! ends; too blest to mourn  
Creation's obsequies. What treasure, this!  
The monarch is a beggar to the man.

Immortal! ages past, yet nothing gone!  
Morn without eve! a race without a goal!  
Unshorten'd by progression infinite!  
Futurity for ever future! life  
Beginning still, where computation ends!  
'Tis the description of a Deity!  
'Tis the description of the meanest slave!  
The meanest slave dares then Lorenzo scorn?  
The meanest slave thy sov'reign glory shares.  
Proud youth! fastidious of the lower world!  
Man's lawful pride includes humility;  
Stoops to the lowest; is too great to find  
Inferiors; all immortal, brothers all!  
Proprietors eternal of thy love.

Immortal! what can strike the sense so strong,  
As this the soul? It thunders to the thought,  
Reason amazes; Gratitude o'erwhelms!  
No more we slumber on the brink of fate;  
Rous'd at the sound, th' exulting soul ascends,  
And breathes her native air; an air that feeds  
Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires;  
Quick kindles all that is divine within us;  
Nor leaves one loit'ring thought beneath the stars.

435 THE COMPLAINT:

Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the flame?  
 Immortal! Were but one immortal, how  
 Would others envy! how would thrones adore!  
 Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost?  
 How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heaven!  
 O vain, vain, vain! all else: Eternity!  
 A glorious and a needful refuge that,  
 From vile imprisonment in abject views.  
 'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone,  
 Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,  
 The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill.  
 That only, and that amply, this performs;  
 Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;  
 Their terror those, and these their lustre lose;  
 Eternity depending covers all;  
 Eternity depending all achieves;  
 Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;  
 Blends her distinctions; abrogates her pow'rs;  
 The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,  
 Fortune's dead frowns, and fascinating smiles,  
 Make one promiscuous and neglected heap,  
 The man beneath; if I may call him man,  
 Whom immortality's full force inspires.  
 Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought:  
 Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,  
 By minds quite conscious of their high descent,  
 Their present province, and their future prize;  
 Divinely darting upward every wish,  
 Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost.

Doubt you this truth? Why labours your belief?  
 If earth's whole orb by some due-distanc'd eye  
 Were seen at once, her tow'ring Alps would sink,  
 And level'd Atlas leave an even sphere.  
 Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,  
 Is swallow'd in Eternity's vast round.  
 To that stupendous view, when souls awake,  
 So large of late, so mountainous to man,  
 Times toys subside; and equal all below.

# NIGHT THE SIXTH. 137

Enthusiastic, this? Then all are weak,  
 But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height  
 Some souls have soar'd; or martyrs ne'er had bled.  
 And all may do, what has by man been done.  
 Who, beaten by those sublunary storms,  
 Boundless, interminable joys can weigh,  
 Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?

What slave unblest, who from to-morrow's dawn  
 Expects an empire? He forgets his chain,  
 And, thron'd in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!

Her own immense appointments to compute,

Or comprehend her high prerogatives,

In this her dark minority, how toils,

How vainly pants, the human soul divine!

Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy;

What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss!

In spite of all the truths the muse has sung,

Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revolv'd!

Are there who wrap the world so close about them,

They see no farther than the clouds, and dance

On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,

Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,

Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song?

Are there, Lorenzo? is it possible?

Are there on earth (let me not call them men)

Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts;

Unconscious as the mountain of its ore,

Or rock of its inestimable gem?

When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these

Shall know their treasure; treasure, then, no more.

Are there (still more amazing!) who resist

The rising thought? who smother, in its birth,

The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?

Who, thro' this bosom-barrier, burst their way;

And, with revers'd ambition, strive to sink?

Who labour downwards thro' th' opposing pow'rs

Of instinct, reason, and the world, against them,

To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock  
Of endless night; night darker than the grave's?  
Who fight the proofs of immortality?  
With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,  
Work all their engines, level their black fires,  
To blot from man this attribute divine,  
(Than vital blood far dearer to the wife),  
Blasphemers, and rank Athiests to themselves?

To contradict them, see all nature rise?

What object, what event, the moon beneath,  
But argues, or endears, an after-scene?  
To reason proves, or weds it to desire?  
All things proclaim it needful; some advance  
One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.  
A thousand arguments swarm round my pen,  
From heaven, and earth, and man. Indulge a few  
By Nature, as her common habit, worn;  
So pressing Providence, a truth to teach,  
Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.

Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys,  
Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms,  
Creation, and holds empire far beyond!  
Eternity's Inhabitant august!

Of two eternities amazing Lord!

One past, ere man's or angel's had begun;  
Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault  
Thy glorious immortality in man:  
A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,  
Of moment infinite! but relish'd most  
By those, who love thee most, who most adore.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth  
Of thee the Great Immutable, to man  
Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;  
And he who most consults her, is most wise.  
Lorenzo, to this heavenly Delphos haste;  
And come back all immortal, all divine:  
Look Nature through; 'tis revolution all;  
All change, no death. Day follows night; and night

# NIGHT THE SIXTH. 913

The dying day; stars rise, and set, and rise;  
 Earth takes th' example. See, the summer gay,  
 With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flow'rs,  
 Droops into pallid autumn: Winter grey,  
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,  
 Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away:  
 Then melts into the spring: Soft Spring, with breath  
 Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,  
 Recalls the first. All to re-flourish, fades.  
 As in a wheel, all sinks, to re-ascend.  
 Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just,  
 Nature revolves, but man advances; both  
 Eternal; that a circle, this a line:  
 That gravitates, this soars. Th' aspiring soul,  
 Ardent, and tremulous, like flame ascends  
 (Zeal and humility her wings) to heaven.  
 The world of matter, with its various forms,  
 All dies into new life. Life born from death  
 Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.  
 No single atom, once in being, lost,  
 With change of counsel charges the Most High.

What hence infers Lorenzo? Can it be?  
 Matter immortal! and shall spirit die?  
 Above the nobler shall less noble rise?  
 Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,  
 No resurrection know? Shall man alone,  
 Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,  
 Less privileg'd than grain, on which he feeds?  
 Is man, in whom alone is pow'r to prize  
 The bliss of being, or with previous pain  
 Deplore its period, by the spleen of Fate  
 Severely doom'd Death's single unredeem'd?

If Nature's revolution speaks aloud,  
 In her gradation hear her louder still.  
 Look Nature thro', 'tis neat gradation all.  
 By what minute degree her scale ascends!  
 Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,



140 THE COMPLAINT:

To that above it join'd, to that beneath.  
 Parts into parts, reciprocally shot,  
 Abhor divorce: what love of union reigns!  
 Here, dormant matter waits a call to life;  
 Half-life, half-death, join there; here, life and sense;  
 There, sense from the reason steals a glimm'ring ray;  
 Reason shines out in man. But how preserv'd  
 The chain unbroken upward, to the realms  
 Of incorporeal life; those realms of bliss,  
 Where death hath no dominion? Grant a make  
 Half mortal, half immortal; earthy, part;  
 And part ethereal: grant the soul of man  
 Eternal; or in man the series ends.  
 Wide yawns the gap; connection is no more:  
 Check'd Reason halts; her next step wants support;  
 Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme;  
 A scheme, analogy pronounc'd so true;  
 Analogy, man's surest guide below.

Thus far, all Nature calls on thy belief.  
 And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,  
 False attestation on all Nature charge,  
 Rather than violate his league with death?  
 Renounce his reason, rather than renounce  
 The dust belov'd, and run the risk of heaven?  
 O what indignity to deathless souls!  
 What treason to the majesty of man!  
 Of man immortal! Hear the lofty stile:  
 "If so decreed, th' Almighty Will be done.  
 "Let earth dissolve, yon pond'rous orbs descend,  
 "And grind us into dust: the soul is safe;  
 "The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,  
 "As tow'ring flame from Nature's fun'ral pyre;  
 "O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;  
 "His charter, his inviolable rights,  
 "Well pleas'd to learn from thunder's impotence,  
 "Death's pointless darts, and hell's defeated storms."  
 But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo!  
 The glories of the world thy sev'nfold shield.

# NIGHT THE SIXTH. 141

Other ambition than of crowns in air,  
 And superlunary felicities,  
 Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can;  
 And turn those glories that inchant, against thee.  
 What ties thee to this life, proclaims the next.  
 If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.  
 Come, my ambitious! let us mount together;  
 (To mount Lorenzo never can refuse);  
 And from the clouds, where pride delights to dwell,  
 Look down on earth.—What seest thou? wond'rous  
 Terrestrial wonders that eclipse the skies. [things!  
 What length of labour'd lands! what loaded seas!  
 Loaded by man, for pleasure, wealth, or war:  
 Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,  
 His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.  
 Nor can th' eternal rocks his will withstand:  
 What levell'd mountains! and what lifted vales!  
 O'er vales, and mountains, sumptuous cities swell,  
 And gild our landscape with their glitt'ring spires.  
 Some 'mid the wond'ring waves majestic rise;  
 And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.  
 Far greater still! (what cannot mortal might?)  
 See, wide dominions ravish'd from the deep!  
 The narrow deep with indignation foams.  
 Or southward turn; to delicate, and grand,  
 The finer arts there ripen in the sun.  
 How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,  
 Ascend the skies! the proud triumphal arch  
 Shews us half heav'n beneath its ample bend.  
 High thro' mid air, here, streams are taught to flow;  
 Whole rivers there, laid by in basons, sleep.  
 Here, plains turn ocean: there, vast oceans join  
 Through kingdoms channell'd deep from shore to  
     shore;  
 And chang'd creation takes its face from man.  
 Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,  
 Where fame and empire wait upon the sword?  
 See fields in blood; hear naval thunders rise;

Britannia's voice! that awes the world to peace.  
How yon enormous mole projecting breaks  
The mid-sea, furious waves! Their roar amidst,  
Out-speaks the Deity; and says, "O main!  
"Thus far, no farther: new restraints obey."  
Earth's disembowel'd! measur'd are the skies!  
Stars are detected in their deep recess!  
Creation widens! vanquish'd Nature yields!  
Her secrets are extorted! Art prevails!

What monuments of genius, spirit, pow'r!  
And now, Lorenzo! raptur'd at this scene,  
Whose glories render heav'n superfluous! say,  
Whose footsteps these?—immortals have been here.  
Could less than souls immortal this have done?  
Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal;  
And proofs of immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess,  
These are Ambition's works; and these are great:  
But this, the least immortal souls can do;  
Transcend them all—But what can these transcend?  
Dost task me, what?—one sigh for the distress'd.  
What then for infidels? a deeper sigh.  
'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man:  
How little they, who think aught great below?  
All our ambitions Death defeats, but one;  
And that it crowns—Here cease we: but, ere long,  
More pow'rful proof shall take the field against thee,  
Stronger than Death, and smiling at the tomb.

THE  
COMPLAINT.  
NIGHT the SEVENTH:  
BEING THE  
SECOND PART  
OF THE  
INFIDEL RECLAIMED;  
CONTAINING  
THE NATURE, PROOF  
AND  
IMPORTANCE  
OF  
IMMORTALITY.

COMMON

NIGHT the SEVENTH

THE

SECOND

OF THE

INDEPENDENT

CONSTITUTION

THE

INDEPENDENT

OF

THE



## P R E F A C E.

AS we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity, is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue; and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange: it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be. Yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase, at this day; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it, if that opinion which is advanced in the Preface to the preceding Night be just. It is there supposed, that all our Infidels, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize, are betrayed into this deplorable error, by some doubt of their immortality, at the bottom. And the more I consider this point, the more am I persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Tho' the distrust of a futurity is a strange error; yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed. For it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? There are but two in nature; but two, within the compass of human thought. And these are,—That either God will not, or can not, punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes. And since omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish, is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, there-

fore, is their only refuge ; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish. And strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions ; they bias the judgment in a manner, almost, incredible. And since on this member of their alternative, there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined, than ever, to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages, it is, accordingly, pursued at large ; and some arguments for immortality, new (at least to me,) are ventured on in them. There also the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view, than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen, for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of heathen antiquity : what pity 'tis they are not sincere ! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider, with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by those whom they so much admire ! What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their heathen worthies, Socrates ('tis well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed : yet this great master of temper was angry ; and angry at his last hour ; and angry with his friend ; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment ! angry, for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising ? What could be the cause ? The cause

was for his honour! 'twas a truly noble, tho' perhaps a too punctilious, regard for immortality: for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, "Where he should deposit his remains?" it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition, that he could be so mean, as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

This fact well considered, would make our Infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates; or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illustrious example, to share his glory; and consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candour and impartiality: Which is all I desire; and that, for their sakes: for I am persuaded, that an unprejudiced Infidel must necessarily receive some advantageous impressions from them.

## CONTENTS of the SEVENTH NIGHT.

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## NIGHT the SEVENTH.

**H**EAUV'N gives the needful, but neglected, call.  
What day, what hour, but knocks at human  
hearts,

To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?  
Deaths stand, like Mercurys, in ev'ry way;  
And kindly point us to our journey's end.  
Pope, who couldst make immortals! art thou dead?  
I give thee joy: nor will I take my leave,  
So soon to follow. Man but dives to death;  
Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise;  
The grave, his subterranean road to bliss.  
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so;  
Thro' various parts our glorious story runs;  
Time gives the preface, endless age unrolls  
The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.

This earth and skies \* already have proclaim'd.  
The world's a prophecy of worlds to come;  
And who, what God fortells (who speaks in things,  
Still louder than in words) shall dare deny?  
If Nature's arguments appear too weak,  
Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in Man.  
If man sleeps on, untaught by what he sees,  
Can he prove infidel to what he feels?  
He, whose blind thought futurity denies,  
Unconscious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,  
His own indictment; he condemns himself:  
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;  
Or, Nature, there imposing on her sons,  
Has written fables; man was made a lie.

Why discontent for ever harbour'd there?  
Incurable consumption of our peace!  
Resolve me, why the cottager, and king,

N 3

\* Night the Sixth.



He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he  
 Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,  
 Repelling winter-blasts with mud and straw,  
 Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh,  
 In fate so distant, in complaint so near?

Is it, that things terrestrial can't content?  
 Deep in rich pasture, will thy flocks complain?  
 Not so; but to their master is deny'd  
 To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease,  
 In this, not his own place, this foreign field,  
 Where nature foddors him with other food  
 Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,  
 Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,  
 Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd.  
 Is Heav'n then kinder to thy flocks, than thee?  
 No so: thy pasture richer, but remote;  
 In part, remote; for that remoter part  
 Man bleats from instinct, tho', perhaps, debauch'd  
 By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause.  
 The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes!  
 It's grief is but his grandeur in disguise;  
 And discontent is immortality.

Shall sons of ether, shall the blood of Heav'n,  
 Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here,  
 With brutal acquiescence in the mire?  
 Lorenzo! no; they shall be nobly pain'd:  
 The glorious foreigners, distressed, shall sigh  
 On thrones; and thou congratulate the sigh:  
 Man's misery declares him born for bliss;  
 His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,  
 And gives the sceptic in his head the lie.

Our heads, our hearts, our passions, and our pow'rs,  
 Speak the same language; call us to the skies:  
 Unripen'd these in this inclement clime,  
 Scarce rise above conjecture, and mistake;  
 And for this land of trifles those too strong  
 Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life:  
 What prize on earth can pay us for the storm?

Meet objects for our passions Heav'n ordain'd,  
 Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave  
 No fault but in defect: Blest Heav'n! avert  
 A bounded ardor for unbounded bliss!  
 O for a bliss unbounded! far beneath  
 A soul immortal is a mortal joy.

Nor are our pow'rs to perish immature;  
 But, after feeble effort here, beneath  
 A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,  
 Transplanted from this sublunary bed,  
 Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom.

Reason progressive, instinct is complete;  
 Swift instinct leaps; slow reason feebly climbs.  
 Brutes soon their zenith reach: their little all  
 Flows in at once; in ages they no more  
 Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy.  
 Were man to live coæval with the sun,  
 The patriarch-pupil would be learning still;  
 Yet, dying, leave his lesson half-unlearn't.  
 Men perish in advance, as if the sun  
 Should set ere noon, in eastern oceans drown'd;  
 If fit, with dim, illustrious to compare,  
 The sun's meridian with the soul of man.  
 To man, why, stepdame Nature! so severe?  
 Why thrown aside thy master-piece half-wrought,  
 While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy?  
 Or, if abortively poor man must die,  
 Nor reach, what reach he might; why die in dread?  
 Why curst with foresight? wife to misery?  
 Why of his proud prerogative the prey?  
 Why less pre-eminent in rank, than pain?  
 His immortality alone can tell;  
 Full ample fund to balance all amiss,  
 And turn the scale in favour of the just!

His immortality alone can solve  
 That darkest of ænigmas, human hope;  
 Of all the darkest, if at death we die.  
 Hope, eager hope, th' assassin of our joy,

152 THE COMPLAINT:

All present blessings treading under foot,  
Is scarce a milder tyrant than despair.  
With no past toils content, still planning new,  
Hope turns us o'er to death alone for ease.  
Possession, why more tasteless than pursuit?  
Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?  
That wish accomplish'd, why the grave of bliss?  
Because, in the great future bury'd deep,  
Beyond our plans of empire, and renown,  
Lyes all that man with ardor should pursue;  
And He who made him, bent him to the right.

Man's heart th' ALMIGHTY to the future sets,  
By secret and inviolable springs;  
And makes his hope his sublunary joy.  
Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still;  
"More, more!" the glutton cries: for something new  
So rages appetite, if man can't mount,  
He will descend. He starves on the possess'd.  
Hence, the world's master, from ambition's spire,  
In Caprea plung'd; and div'd beneath the brute.  
In that rank sty why wallow'd empire's son  
Supreme? because he could no higher fly;  
His riot was ambition in despair.

Old Rome consulted birds; Lorenzo! thou  
With more success, the flight of hope survey;  
Of restless hope, for ever on the wing.  
High-perch'd o'er ev'ry thought that falcon sits,  
To fly at all that rises in her sight;  
And, never stooping, but to mount again  
Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,  
And own her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.

There should it fail us (it must fail us there,  
If being fails,) more mournful riddles rise,  
And virtue vies with hope in mystery.  
Why virtue? Where its praise, its being, fled?  
Virtue is true self-interest pursu'd:  
What true self-int'rest of quite-mortal man?  
To close with all that makes him happy here.

If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,  
Then vice is virtue; 'tis our sov'reign good.  
In self-applause is virtue's golden prize?  
No self-applause attends it on thy scheme:  
Whence self-applause? from conscience of the right.  
And what is right, but means of happiness?  
No means of happiness when virtue yields;  
That basis failing, falls the building too,  
And lays in ruins ev'ry virtuous joy.

The rigid guardian of a blameless heart,  
So long rever'd, so long reputed wise,  
Is weak; with rank knight-errandries o'er-run.  
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams  
Of self-exposure, laudable and great?  
Of gallant enterprize, and glorious death?  
Die for thy country?—Thou romantic fool!  
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink:  
Thy country, what to thee?—the God-head, what?  
(I speak with awe!) tho' He should bid thee bleed?  
If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt,  
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow.  
Be deaf; preserve thy being; disobey.

Nor is it disobedience: know, Lorenzo!  
Whate'er th' Almighty's subsequent command,  
His first command is this:—"Man, love thyself."  
In this, alone, free-agents are not free.  
Existence is the basis, bliss the prize;  
If virtue costs existence, 'tis a crime;  
Bold violation of our law supreme,  
Black suicide; tho' nations, which consult  
Their gain, at thy expence, rebound applause.

Since Virtue's recompence is doubtful, here,  
If man dies wholly, well may we demand,  
Why is man suffer'd to be good in vain?  
Why to be good in vain, is man enjoin'd?  
Why to be good in vain, is man betray'd?  
Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breast,  
By sweet complacencies from virtue felt?

Why whispers Nature lies on Virtue's part?  
 Or if blind instinct (which assumes the name  
 Of sacred conscience) plays the fool in man,  
 Why reason made accomplice in the cheat?  
 Why are the wisest loudest in her praise?  
 Can man by reason's beam be led astray?  
 Or, at his peril, imitate his God?  
 Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,  
 Or both are true, or man survives the grave.

Or man survives the grave, or own, Lorenzo,  
 Thy boast supreme a wild absurdity.  
 Dauntless thy spirit; cowards are thy scorn.  
 Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.  
 The man immortal, rationally brave,  
 Dares rush on death—because he cannot die.  
 But if man loses all, when life is lost,  
 He lives a coward, or a fool expires.  
 A daring infidel (and such they are,  
 From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,  
 Or pure heroical defect of thought)  
 Of all earth's madmen, most deserves a chain.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd  
 For valour, virtue, science, all we love,  
 And all we praise; for worth, whose noon-tide beam,  
 Enabling us to think in higher stile,  
 Mends our ideas of ethereal pow'rs;  
 Dream we, that lustre of the moral world  
 Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?  
 Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,  
 And strenuous to transcribe, in human life,  
 The mind ALMIGHTY? could it be, that fate,  
 Just when the lineaments began to shine,  
 And dawn the DEITY, should snatch the draught,  
 With night eternal blot it out, and give  
 The skies alarm, lest angels too might die?

If human souls, why not angelic too  
 Extinguish'd? and a solitary God,  
 O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne?



NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 155

Shall we, this moment, gaze on God in man?  
 The next, lose man for ever in the dust?  
 From dust we disengage, or man mistakes,  
 And there, where least his judgement fears a flaw.  
 Wisdom, and worth, how boldly he commends!  
 Wisdom and worth are sacred names; rever'd,  
 Where not embrac'd; applauded! deify'd!  
 Why not compassion'd too? If spirits die,  
 Both are calamities, inflicted both  
 To make us but more wretched: Wisdom's eye  
 Acute, for what? to spy more miseries;  
 And worth, so recompens'd, new-points their stings.  
 Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,  
 And worth exalted humbles us the more.  
 Thou wilt not patronize a scheme that makes  
 Weakness and vice the refuge of mankind.

"Has virtue, then, no joys?"—Yes, joys dear  
 Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state, [bought.  
 Virtue and vice are at eternal war.  
 Virtue's a combat; and who fights for nought?  
 Or for precarious, or for small reward?  
 Who virtue's self-reward so loud resound,  
 Would take degrees angelic here below,  
 And virtue, while they compliment, betray,  
 By feeble motives, and unfaithful guards.  
 The crown, th' unfading crown, her soul inspires:  
 'Tis that, and that alone, can countervail  
 The body's treach'ries, and the world's assaults:  
 On earth's poor pay, our famish'd virtue dies.  
 Truth incontestible! in spite of all  
 A BAYLE has preach'd, or a V——E believ'd.

In man the more we dive, the more we see  
 Heav'n's signet stamping an immortal make.  
 Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base  
 Sustaining all; what find we? knowledge, love.  
 As light, and heat, essential to the sun,  
 These to the soul. And why, if souls expire?  
 How little lovely here? how little known?

156 THE COMPLAINT:

Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil;  
 And love unfeign'd may purchase perfect hate.  
 Why starv'd, on earth, our angel-appetites;  
 While brutal are indulg'd their fulsome fill?  
 Were then capacities divine conferr'd,  
 As a mock diadem, in savage sport,  
 Rank insult of our pompous poverty,  
 Which reaps but pain, from seeming claims so fair?  
 In future age lyes no redress? and shuts  
 Eternity the door on our complaint?

If so, for what strange ends were mortals made!  
 The worst to wallow, and the best to weep;  
 The man who merits most, must most complain:  
 Can we conceive a disregard in Heaven,  
 What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?

This cannot be. To love, and know, in man  
 Is boundless appetite, and boundless pow'r;  
 And these demonstrate boundless objects too.  
 Objects, pow'rs, appetites, Heav'n suits in all;  
 Nor, nature thro', e'er violates this sweet,  
 Eternal concord, on her tuneful string.  
 Is man the sole exception from her laws?  
 Eternity struck off from human hope,  
 (I speak with truth, but veneration too)  
 Man is a monster, the reproach of Heav'n,  
 A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud  
 On nature's beauteous aspect; and deforms,  
 (Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.  
 If such is man's allotment, what is heav'n?  
 Or own the soul immortal, or blaspheme.

Or own the soul immortal, or invert  
 All order. Go, mock-majesty! go, man!  
 And bow to thy superiors of the stall;  
 Thro' every scene of sense superior far!  
 They graze the turf untill'd; they drink the stream  
 Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unembitter'd  
 With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs;  
 Mankind's peculiar! reason's precious dow'r!

No foreign clime they ransack for their robes;  
 Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar:  
 Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd;  
 They find a paradise in every field,  
 On boughs forbidden where no curses hang:  
 Their ill no more than strikes the sense; unstretch'd  
 By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:  
 When the worst comes, it comes unfear'd; one stroke  
 Begins, and ends their wo: they die but once;  
 Bless'd, uncommunicable privilege! for which  
 Proud man, who rules the globe, and reads the stars,  
 Philosopher, or hero, sighs in vain.

Account for this prerogative in brutes.

No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,  
 But what beams on it from eternity.  
 O sole and sweet solution! that unties  
 The difficult, and softens the severe;  
 The cloud on Nature's beauteous face dispels;  
 Restores bright order; casts the brute beneath;  
 And re-inthrones us in supremacy  
 Of joy, ev'n here: admit immortal life,  
 And Virtue is knight-errantry no more;  
 Each virtue brings in hand a golden dow'r,  
 Far richer in reversion: Hope exults;  
 And tho' much bitter in our cup is thrown,  
 Predominates, and gives the taste of heaven.  
 O wherefore is the Deity so kind?  
 Astonishing beyond astonishment!  
 Heav'n our reward—for heav'n enjoy'd below!  
 Still unsubdu'd thy stubborn heart? for there  
 The traitor lurks, who doubts the truth I sing.  
 Reason is guiltless, will alone rebels.  
 What, in that stubborn heart, if I should find  
 New, unexpected witnesses against thee?  
 Ambition, pleasure, and the love of gain!  
 Canst thou suspect, that these, which make the soul  
 The slave of earth, should own her heir of heaven?  
 Canst thou suspect what makes us disbelieve

## 158 THE COMPLAINT:

Our immortality, should prove it sure?

First, then, Ambition summon to the bar.  
Ambition's shame, extravagance, disgust,  
And inextinguishable nature, speak.  
Each much depofes; hear them in their turn.

Thy soul, how passionately fond of Fame!  
How anxious that fond passion to conceal!  
We blush, detected in designs on praise,  
Tho' for best deeds, and from the best of men;  
And why? because immortal. Art divine  
Has made the body tutor to the soul;  
Heav'n kindly gives our blood a moral flow;  
Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there  
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,  
Which stoops to court a character from man;  
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit  
Far more than man, with endless praise, and blame.

Ambition's boundless appetite out-speaks  
The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire  
At high presumptions of their own desert,  
One age is poor applause; the mighty shout,  
The thunder by the living few begun,  
Late time must echo; worlds unborn, resound.  
We wish our name eternally to live:  
Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human thought,  
Had not our natures been eternal too.  
Instinct points out an int'rest in hereafter;  
But our blind reason sees not where it lyes;  
Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.  
Fame is the shade of immortality,  
And in itself a shadow. Soon as caught,  
Contemn'd; it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.  
Consult th' ambitious, 'tis ambition's cure.  
"And is this all?" cry'd Cæsar at his height,  
Disgusted. This third proof ambition brings  
Of immortality. The first in fame,  
Observe him near, your envy will abate;  
Sham'd at the disproportion vast, between

The passion and the purchase, he will sigh  
 At such success, and blush at his renown:  
 And why? because far richer prize invites  
 His heart; far more illustrious glory calls;  
 It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

And can ambition a fourth proof supply!  
 It can, and stronger than the former three;  
 Yet quite o'erlook'd by some reputed wise.  
 Tho' disappointments in ambition pain,  
 And tho' success disgusts, yet still, Lorenzo!  
 In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts;  
 By nature planted for the noblest ends.  
 Absurd the fam'd advice to Pyrrhus giv'n,  
 More prais'd than ponder'd; specious, but unsound:  
 Sooner that hero's sword the world had quell'd,  
 Than reason his ambition. Man must soar:  
 An obstinate activity within,  
 An insuppressive spring, will toss him up,  
 In spite of Fortune's load. Not kings alone,  
 Each villager has his ambition too;  
 No Sultan prouder than his fetter'd slave:  
 Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,  
 Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,  
 And cry,—“ Behold the wonders of my might!”  
 And why? because immortal as their lord:  
 And souls immortal must for ever heave  
 At something great; the glitter, or the gold;  
 The praise of mortals, or the praise of heav'n.

Nor absolutely vain is human praise,  
 When human is supported by divine.  
 I'll introduce Lorenzo to himself;  
 Pleasure and pride (bad masters!) share our hearts.  
 As love of pleasure is ordain'd to guard  
 And feed our bodies, and extend our race;  
 The love of praise is planted to protect  
 And propagate the glories of the mind.  
 What is it, but the love of praise, inspires,  
 Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts



Earth's happiness; from that, the delicate,  
 The grand, the marvellous, of civil life,  
 Want and Convenience, under-workers, lay  
 The basis, on which love of glory builds.  
 Nor is thy life, O Virtue! less in debt  
 To Praise, thy secret-stimulating friend.  
 Were men not proud, what merit should we miss!  
 Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.  
 Praise is the salt that seasons right to man,  
 And whets his appetite for moral good.  
 Thirst of applause is Virtue's second guard;  
 Reason, her first: but Reason wants an aid;  
 Our private reason is a flatterer;  
 Thirst of applause calls public judgment in,  
 To poise our own, to keep an even scale,  
 And give endanger'd Virtue fairer play.  
 Here a fifth proof arises, stronger still:  
 Why this so nice construction of our hearts?  
 These delicate moralities of sense;  
 This constitutional reserve of aid  
 To succour virtue, when our reason fails;  
 If virtue kept alive by care and toil,  
 And oft the mark of injuries on earth,  
 When labour'd to maturity (its bill  
 Of disciplines, and pains, unpaid) must die?  
 Why freighted rich, to dash against a rock?  
 Were man to perish when most fit to live,  
 O how mispent were all these stratagems,  
 By skill divine inwoven in our frame?  
 Where are Heav'n's holiness and mercy fled?  
 Laughs Heav'n, at once, at virtue, and at man?  
 If not, why that discourag'd, this destroy'd?  
 Thus far Ambition. What says Avarice?  
 This her chief maxim, which has long been thine;  
 "The wise and wealthy are the same."—I grant it.  
 To store up treasure with incessant toil,  
 This is man's province, this his highest praise.  
 To this great end keen instinct stings him on.

NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 161

To guide that instinct, Reason! is thy charge;  
 'Tis thine to tell us where true treasure lyes:  
 But, Reason failing to discharge her trust,  
 Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,  
 A blunder follows; and blind Industry,  
 Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course,  
 (The course where stakes of more than gold are won),  
 O'erloading with the cares of distant age  
 The jaded spirits of the present hour,  
 Provides for an eternity below.

"Thou shalt not covet," is a wise command;  
 But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys:  
 Look farther, the command stands quite revers'd,  
 And avarice is a virtue most divine.  
 Is faith a refuge for our happiness?  
 Most sure; and is it not for reason too?  
 Nothing this world unriddles, but the next.  
 Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain?  
 From inextinguishable life in man:  
 Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the skies,  
 Had wanted wing to fly so far in guilt.  
 Sour grapes, I grant, ambition, avarice:  
 Yet still their root is immortality.  
 These its wild growths, so bitter, and so base,  
 (Pain, and reproach!) religion can reclaim,  
 Refine, exalt, throw down their pois'nous lee,  
 And make them sparkle in the bowl of bliss.

See, the third witness laughs at bliss remote,  
 And falsely promises an Eden here:  
 'Fruth she shall speak for once, tho' prone to lie,  
 A common cheat, and Pleasure is her name.  
 To pleasure never was Lorenzo deaf;  
 Then hear her now, now first thy real friend.

Since Nature made us not more fond than proud  
 Of happiness (whence hypocrites in joy!  
 Makers of mirth! artificers of smiles!)  
 Why should the joy most poignant sense affords,  
 Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride?—

Those heav'n-born blushes tell us man descends,  
 Ev'n in the zenith of his earthly blifs:  
 Should Reason take her infidel repose,  
 This honest instinct speaks our lineage high;  
 This instinct calls on darkness to conceal  
 Our rapturous relation to the stalls.  
 Our glory covers us with noble shame;  
 And he that's unconfounded, is unman'd.  
 The man that blushes is not quite a brute.  
 Thus far with thee, Lorenzo! will I close,  
 Pleasure is good; and man for pleasure made;  
 But pleasure full of glory as of joy,  
 Pleasure which neither blushes nor expires.

The witnesses are heard; the cause is o'er;  
 Let conscience file the sentence in her court,  
 Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey:  
 Thus, seal'd by Truth, th' authentic record runs.

“ Know, all: know, Infidels,—unapt to know!  
 “ 'Tis immortality your nature solves;  
 “ 'Tis immortality decyphers man,  
 “ And opens all the myst'ries of his make:  
 “ Without it, half his instincts are a riddle;  
 “ Without it, all his virtues are a dream.  
 “ His very crimes attest his dignity;  
 “ His fateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,  
 “ Declares him born for blessings infinite:  
 “ What less than infinite makes un-absurd  
 “ Passions, which all on earth but more inflames?  
 “ Fierce passions, so mis-measur'd to this scene,  
 “ Stretch'd out, like eagles wings, beyond our nest,  
 “ Far, far beyond the worth of all below,  
 “ For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,  
 “ And evidence our title to the skies.”

Ye gentle theologues, of calmer kind!  
 Whose constitution dictates to your pen!  
 Who, cold yourselves, think ardor comes from hell!  
 Think not our passions from corruption sprung,  
 Tho' to corruption now they lend their wings;

That is their mistress, not their mother. All  
 (And justly) reason deem divine : I see,  
 I feel, a grandeur in the passions too,  
 Which speaks their high descent and glorious end ;  
 Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire.  
 In paradise itself they burnt as strong,  
 Ere Adam fell ; tho' wiser in their aim.  
 Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,  
 What tho' our passions are run mad, and stoop  
 With low, terrestrial appetite, to graze  
 On trash, on toys, dethron'd from high desire ?  
 Yet still, thro' their disgrace, no feeble ray  
 Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell :  
 But these (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd)  
 When reason moderates the rein aright,  
 Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,  
 Where once they soar'd illustrious ; ere seduc'd  
 By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on earth,  
 And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their phrenzy lasts ; their phrensy fails  
 To disappoint one providential end,  
 For which Heav'n blew up ardor in our hearts :  
 Were reason silent, boundless passion speaks  
 A future scene of boundless objects too,  
 And brings glad tidings of eternal day.  
 Eternal day ! 'tis that enlightens all ;  
 And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it sure.  
 Consider man as an immortal being,  
 Intelligible all ; and all is great ;  
 A chrySTALLINE transparency prevails,  
 And strikes full lustre thro' the human sphere ;  
 Consider man as mortal, all is dark,  
 And wretched ; Reason weeps at the survey.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, " And let her weep,  
 " Weak, modern Reason : ancient times were wise.  
 " Authority, that venerable guide,  
 " Stands on my part ; the fam'd Athenian porch  
 " (And who for wisdom so renown'd as they ?)

"Deny'd this immortality to man."

I grant it; but affirm, they prov'd it too.

A riddle this!—Have patience; I'll explain.

What noble vanities, what moral flights,  
Glitt'ring thro' their romantic wisdom's page,  
Make us at once despise them and admire?

Fable is flat to these high-season'd fires;

They leave th' extravagance of song below.

"Flesh shall not feel; or, feeling, shall enjoy

"The dagger or the rack; to them, alike

"A bed of roses, or the burning bull."

In men exploding all beyond the grave,

Strange doctrine, this! As doctrine, it was strange;

But not as prophecy; for such it prov'd,

And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd:

They feign'd a firmness Christians need not feign.

The Christian truly triumph'd in the flame:

The Stoic saw, in double wonder lost;

Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,

To find the bold adventures of his thought

Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.

Whence, then, those thoughts? those tow'ring  
thoughts, that flew

Such monstrous heights?—From instinct, and from

The glorious instinct of a deathless soul, [pride.

Confus'dly conscious of her dignity,

Suggested truths they could not understand.

In Lust's dominion, and in Passion's storm,

Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay,

As light in chaos, glimm'ring thro' the gloom:

Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,

Pleas'd Pride proclaim'd, what Reason disbeliev'd.

Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell,

Rav'd nonsense, destin'd to be future sense,

When life immortal, in full day, should shine;

And death's dark shadows fly the gospel sun.

They spoke, what nothing but immortal souls

Could speak; and thus the truth they question'd, prov'd.



NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 165

Can then absurdities, as well as crimes,  
 Speak man immortal? All things speak him so.  
 Much has been urg'd; and dost thou call for more?  
 Call; and with endless questions be distress'd,  
 All unresolvable, if earth is all.

- " Why life, a moment; infinite, desire?  
 " Our wish, eternity? our home, the grave?  
 " Heav'n's promise dormant lyes in human hope;  
 " Who wishes life immortal, proves it too.  
 " Why happiness pursu'd, tho' never found?  
 " Man's thirst of happiness declares It is,  
 " (For Nature never gravitates to nought)  
 " That thirst unquench'd declares, It is not here.  
 " My Lucia, thy Clarissa call to thought;  
 " Why cordial friendship rivetted so deep,  
 " As hearts to pierce at first, at parting, rend,  
 " If friend, and friendship, vanish in an hour?  
 " Is not this torment, in the mask of joy?  
 " Why by reflection marr'd the joys of sense?  
 " Why past, and future, preying on our hearts,  
 " And putting all our present joys to death?  
 " Why labours reason? instinct were as well;  
 " Instinct, far better; what can chuse, can err:  
 " O how infallible the thoughtless brute!  
 " 'Twere well his Holiness were half as sure.  
 " Reason with inclination, why at war?  
 " Why sense of guilt? why conscience up in arms?"

Conscience of guilt, is prophecy of pain,  
 And bosom-council to decline the blow.  
 Reason with inclination ne'er had jar'd,  
 If nothing future paid forbearance here.  
 Thus on—These, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,  
 All promise, some ensure, a second scene;  
 Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far  
 Than all things else most certain: were it false,  
 What truth on earth so precious as the lie?  
 This world it gives us, let what will ensue;  
 This world it gives, in that high cordial, hope;

The future of the present is the soul:  
 How this life groans, when fever'd from the next!  
 Poor, mutilated wretch, that disbelieves!  
 By dark distrust his being, cut in two,  
 In both parts perishes; life void of joy,  
 Sad prelude of eternity in pain!

Couldst thou persuade me, the next life could fail  
 Our ardent wishes; how should I pour out  
 My bleeding heart in anguish, new, as deep!  
 Oh with what thoughts, thy hope, and my despair,  
 Abhor'd ANNIHILATION, blasts the soul,  
 And wide extends the bounds of human wo!  
 Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,  
 In this black channel would my ravings run:

“ Grief from the future borrow'd peace ere-while.  
 “ The future vanish'd! and the present pain'd!  
 “ Strange import of unprecedented ill!  
 “ Fall, how profound! like Lucifer's the fall!  
 “ Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!  
 “ From where fond Hope built her pavilion high  
 “ The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once  
 “ To night! to nothing! darker still than night.  
 “ If 'twas a dream, why wake me, my worst foe,  
 “ Lorenzo! boastful of the name of friend!  
 “ O for delusion! O for error still!  
 “ Could Vengeance strike much stronger than to plant  
 “ A thinking being in a world like this,  
 “ Not over rich before, now beggar'd quite;  
 “ More curs'd than at the fall?—The sun goes out!  
 “ The thorn shoots up! What thorns in ev'ry thought?  
 “ Why sense of better? it imbitters worse.  
 “ Why sense, why life, if but to sigh, then sink  
 “ To what I was? twice nothing! and much wo!  
 “ Wo from Heav'n's bounties! wo from what was  
 “ To flatter most, high intellectual pow'rs. [wont  
 “ Thought, virtue, knowledge! blessings, by thy  
 scheme,  
 “ All poison'd into pains. First, knowledge, once

NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 167

- " My soul's ambition, now her greatest dread.  
 " To know myself, true wisdom?—no, to thun  
 " That shocking science. Parent of despair!  
 " Avert thy mirror: if I see, I die.  
 " Know my Creator! climb his blest'd abode  
 " By painful speculation! pierce the veil,  
 " Dive in his nature, read his attributes,  
 " And gaze in admiration——on a foe,  
 " Obtruding life, with-holding happiness!  
 " From the full rivers that surround his throne,  
 " Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;  
 " Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease  
 " To curse his birth, nor envy reptiles more!  
 " Ye sable clouds! ye darkest shades of night!  
 " Hide him, for ever hide him from my thought,  
 " Once all my comfort; source, and soul of joy! [me.  
 " Now leagu'd with furies, and with Thee\*, against  
 " Know his achievements! study his renown!  
 " Contemplate this amazing universe,  
 " Dropp'd from his hand, with miracles replete!  
 " For what? 'Mid miracles of nobler name,  
 " To find one miracle of misery?  
 " To find the being, which alone can know  
 " And praise his works, a blemish on his praise?  
 " Thro' Nature's ample range, in thought, to stroll,  
 " And start at man, the single mourner there,  
 " Breathing high hope! chain'd down to pangs and  
 death?  
 " Knowing is suff'ring: and shall Virtue share  
 " The sigh of Knowledge? Virtue shares the sigh.  
 " By straining up the steep of excellent,  
 " By battles fought, and from temptation won,  
 " What gains she but the pang of seeing worth,  
 " Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark  
 " With every vice, and swept to brutal dust?  
 " Merit is madness; virtue is a crime;  
 " A crime to reason, if it costs us pain  
 " Unpaid: what pain, amidst a thousand more,

\* Lorenzo.

168 THE COMPLAINT:

- " To think the most abandon'd, after days  
 " Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death  
 " As soft a pillow, nor make fouler clay!  
 " Duty! religion!—these, our duty done,  
 " Imply reward. Religion is mistake.  
 " Duty!—there's none, but to repel the cheat.  
 " Ye cheats, away! ye daughters of my pride!  
 " Who feign yourselves the fav'rites of the skies:  
 " Ye tow'ring hopes! abortive energies!  
 " That toss and struggle in my lying breast,  
 " To scale the skies, and build presumptions there,  
 " As I were heir of an eternity!  
 " Vain, vain ambitions! trouble me no more.  
 " Why travel far in quest of sure defeat?  
 " As bounded as my being, be my wish.  
 " All is inverted, Wisdom is a fool.  
 " Sense! take the rein; blind Passion! drive us on:  
 " And, Ignorance! befriend us in our way;  
 " Ye new, but truest patterns of our peace!  
 " Yes; give the pulse full empire; live the brute,  
 " Since, as the brute, we die. The sum of man,  
 " Of godlike man! to revel, and to rot!  
 " But not on equal terms with other brutes:  
 " Their revels a more poignant relish yield,  
 " And safer too; they never poisons chuse:  
 " Instinct, than Reason, makes more wholesome meals,  
 " And sends all-marring murmur far away.  
 " For sensual life they best philosophize;  
 " Theirs, that serene the sages sought in vain;  
 " 'Tis man alone expostulates with Heav'n;  
 " His, all the pow'r, and all the cause, to mourn.  
 " Shall human eyes alone dissolve in tears?  
 " And bleed, in anguish, none but human hearts?  
 " The wide-stretch'd realm of intellectual wo,  
 " Surpassing sensual far, is all our own.  
 " In life so fatally distinguish'd, why  
 " Cast in one lot, confounded, lump'd, in death?  
 " Ere yet in being, was mankind in guilt?

- " Why thunder'd this peculiar clause against us,  
 " All-mortal and all-wretched?—Have the skies  
 " Reasons of state, their subjects may not scan,  
 " Nor humbly reason, when they sorely sigh?  
 " All-mortal, and all-wretched!—'tis too much;  
 " Unparallel'd in nature: 'tis too much  
 " On being unrequested at thy hands,  
 " Omnipotent! for I see nought but pow'r.  
 " And why see that? why thought? To toil, and eat,  
 " Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.  
 " What superfluities are reas'ning souls!  
 " Oh, give eternity! or thought destroy!  
 " But without thought our curse were half unfelt;  
 " Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart,  
 " And therefore 'tis bestow'd. I thank thee, Reason,  
 " For aiding life's too small calamities,  
 " And giving being to the dread of Death.  
 " Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much  
 " For me to trespass on the brutal rights?  
 " Too much for Heav'n to make one emmet more?  
 " Too much for Chaos to permit my mass  
 " A longer stay with essences unwrought,  
 " Unfashion'd, untormented into man?  
 " Wretched preferment to this round of pains!  
 " Wretched capacity of frenzy, thought!  
 " Wretched capacity of dying life!  
 " Life, thought, worth, wisdom, all (O foul revolt!)  
 " Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.  
 " Death, then, has chang'd its nature too: O  
     Death!  
 " Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heav'n!  
 " Best friend of man! since man is man no more.  
 " Why in this thorny wilderness so long,  
 " Since there's no promis'd land's ambrosial bow'r  
 " To pay me with its honey for my stings?  
 " If needful to the selfish schemes of Heav'n  
 " To sting us sore, why mock'd our misery?  
 " Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads?



- " Why this illustrious canopy display'd ?  
 " Why so manificently lodg'd despair ?  
 " At stated periods, sure-returning, roll  
 " These glorious orbs, that mortals may compute  
 " Their length of labours, and of pains ; nor lose  
 " Their misery's full measure ?—Smiles with flow'rs,  
 " And fruits promiscuous, ever-teeming earth,  
 " That man may languish in luxurious scenes,  
 " And in an Eden mourn his wither'd joys ?  
 " Claim earth and skies man's admiration, due  
 " For such delights ! Bless'd animals ! too wise  
 " To wonder ; and too happy to complain !  
 " Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene :  
 " Why not a dungeon dark, for the condemn'd ?  
 " Why not the dragon's subterranean den,  
 " For man to howl in ? why not his abode  
 " Of the same dismal colour with his fate ?  
 " A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expence  
 " Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders,  
 " As congruous as, for man, this lofty dome,  
 " Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high  
 " If, from her humble chamber in the dust [desire ;  
 " While proud thought swells, and high desire in-  
     flames,  
 " The poor worm calls us for her inmates there ;  
 " And, round us, Death's inexorable hand  
 " Draws the dark curtain close, undrawn no more.  
 " Undrawn no more !—Behind the cloud of Death,  
 " Once, I beheld a sun ; a sun which gilt  
 " That sable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold :  
 " How the grave's alter'd ! fathomless, as hell !  
 " A real hell to those who dreamt of heav'n.  
 " ANNIHILATION ! how it yawns before me !  
 " Next moment I may drop from thought, from sense,  
 " The privilege of angels, and of worms,  
 " An outcast from existence ! and this spirit,  
 " This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,  
 " This particle of energy divine,

# NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 171

" Which travels nature, flies from star to star,  
 " And visits gods, and emulates their pow'rs,  
 " For ever is extinguish'd. Horror! death!  
 " Death of that death, I, fearless, once survey'd!—  
 " When horror universal shall descend,  
 " And heav'n's dark concave urn all human race,  
 " On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,  
 " How just this verse! this monumental sigh!"

" Beneath the lumber of demolish'd worlds,  
 " Deep in the rubbish of the gen'ral wreck,  
 " Swept ignominious to the common mass  
 " Of matter, never dignify'd with life,  
 " Here ly proud rationals; the sons of Heav'n!  
 " The lords of earth! the property of worms!  
 " Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow!  
 " Who liv'd in terror, and in pangs expir'd!  
 " All gone to rot in chaos; or to make  
 " Their happy transit into blocks, or brutes,  
 " Nor longer fully their CREATOR's name."

Lorenzo! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce.  
 Just is this history? If such is man,  
 Mankind's historian, tho' divine, might weep.  
 And dares Lorenzo smile?—I know thee proud;  
 For once let pride befriend thee: pride looks pale  
 At such a scene, and sighs for something more.  
 Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,  
 And art thou then a shadow? less than shade?  
 A nothing? less than nothing? To have been,  
 And not to be, is lower than unborn.  
 Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm  
 Thine equal? Runs thy taste of pleasure high?  
 Why patronize sure death of ev'ry joy?  
 Charm riches? Why chuse begg'ry in the grave,  
 Of ev'ry hope a bankrupt? and for ever!  
 Ambition, Pleasure, Avarice, persuade thee  
 To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,

172 THE COMPLAINT:

They\* lately prov'd, thy soul's supreme desire.

What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?  
Great Nature's master-appetite destroy'd!  
Is endless life, and happiness, despis'd?  
Or both wish'd, here, where neither can be found?  
Such man's perverse, eternal war with Heav'n!  
Dar'st thou persist? and is there nought on earth,  
But a long train of transitory forms,  
Rising, and breaking, millions in an hour?  
Bubbles of a fantastick deity, blown up  
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd?  
Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!  
Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?  
Kind is fell Lucifer, compar'd to thee:  
Oh! spare this waste of being half divine;  
And vindicate the oeconomy of Heav'n.

Heav'n is all love; all joy in giving joy.  
It never had created, but to bless:  
And shall it, then, strike off the list of life  
A being blest, or worthy so to be?  
Heav'n starts at an annihilating God.

Is that, all Nature starts at, thy desire?  
Art such a clod, to wish thyself all clay?  
What is that dreadful wish?—the dying groan  
Of nature, murder'd by the blackest guilt.  
What deadly poison has thy nature drank?  
To nature undebauch'd no shock so great;  
Nature's first wish is endless happiness;  
Annihilation is an after-thought,  
A monstrous wish, unborn till virtue dies.  
And oh! what depth of horror lyes inclos'd!  
For non-existence no man ever wish'd,  
But first he wish'd the DEITY destroy'd.

If so, what words are dark enough to draw  
Thy picture true? the darkest are too fair.  
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour  
Of desperation, by what fury's aid,  
In what infernal posture of the soul,

\* In the Sixth Night.

All hell invited, and all hell in joy,  
 At such a birth, a birth so near of kin,  
 Did thy foul fancy whelp so black a scheme  
 Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,  
 And deities begun, reduc'd to dust?

There's nought (thou sayst) but one eternal flux  
 Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven  
 Thro' Time's rough billows into Night's abyfs.  
 Say in this rapid tide of human ruin,  
 Is there no rock, on which man's tossing thought  
 Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,  
 And boldly think it something to be born?  
 Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,  
 Is there no central, all-sustaining base,  
 All-realizing, all-connecting pow'r,  
 Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,  
 And force destruction to refund her spoil!  
 Command the grave restore her taken prey?  
 Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield,  
 And earth, and ocean, pay their debt of man,  
 True to the grand deposit trusted there?  
 Is there no potentate, whose out-stretch'd arm,  
 When ripening time calls forth th'appointed hour,  
 Pluck'd from foul devastation's famish'd maw,  
 Binds present, past, and future, to his throne?  
 His throne, how glorious, thus divinely grac'd,  
 By germinating beings clust'ring round!  
 A garland worthy the Divinity!  
 A throne, by Heav'n's omnipotence in smiles,  
 Built (like a Pharos, tow'ring in the waves)  
 Amidst immense effusions of his love!  
 An ocean of communicated bliss!

An all-prolific, all-preserving God!  
 This were a God indeed.—And such is man,  
 As here presum'd: he rises from his fall.  
 Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,  
 Each blossom fair of DEITY destroy'd?  
 Nothing is dead; nay, nothing sleeps: each soul,

That ever animated human clay,  
 Now wakes; is on the wing; and where, O where,  
 Will the swarm settle?—When the trumpet's call,  
 As sounding brass, collects us, round Heav'n's throne  
 Conglob'd, we bask in everlasting day,  
 (Paternal splendor!) and adhere for ever.  
 Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,  
 In this vast vessel of the universe,  
 How should we gasp, as in an empty void!  
 How in the pangs of famish'd hope expire!

How bright this prospect shines! how gloomy thine!  
 A trembling world! and a devouring God!  
 Earth, but the shambles of omnipotence!  
 Heav'n's face all stain'd with causeless massacres  
 Of countless millions, born to feel the pang  
 Of being lost. Lorenzo! can it be?  
 This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life.  
 Who would be born to such a phantom world,  
 Where nought substantial but our misery?  
 Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,  
 So soon to perish, and revive no more?  
 The greater such a joy, the more it pains.  
 A world, so far from great (and yet how great  
 It shines to thee!) there's nothing real in it;  
 Being, a shadow! consciousness, a dream!  
 A dream, how dreadful! universal blank  
 Before it, and behind! poor man, a spark  
 From non-existence struck by wrath divine,  
 Glitt'ring a moment, nor that moment sure,  
 'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night,  
 His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!

Lorenzo! dost thou feel these arguments?  
 Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?  
 How hast thou dared the DEITY dethrone?  
 How dared indict him of a world like this?  
 If such the world, creation was a crime;  
 For what is crime, but cause of misery?  
 Retract, Blasphemer! and unriddle this,



Of endless arguments above, below,  
Without us, and within, the short result—  
“If man’s immortal, there’s a God in heav’n.”

But wherefore such redundancy, such waste,  
Of argument? One sets my soul at rest;  
One obvious, and at hand, and, oh!—at heart.  
So just the skies, Philander’s life so pain’d,  
His heart so pure; that, or succeeding scenes  
Have palms to give, or ne’er had he been born.

“What an old tale is this!” Lorenzo cries.—  
I grant this argument is old; but truth  
No years impair; and had not this been true,  
Thou never hadst despis’d it for its age.  
Truth is immortal as thy soul; and fable  
As fleeting as thy joys: be wise, nor make  
Heav’n’s highest blessing, vengeance; O be wise!  
Nor make a curse of immortality.

Say, know’st thou what it is? or what thou art?  
Know’st thou th’ importance of a soul immortal?  
Behold this midnight glory; worlds on worlds!  
Amazing pomp! Redouble this amaze;  
Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more:  
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all;  
And calls th’ astonishing magnificence  
Of unintelligent creation, poor.

For this believe not me; no man believe;  
Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less  
Than those of the SUPREME; nor his, a few;  
Consult them all; consulted, all proclaim  
Thy soul’s importance: Tremble at thyself;  
For whom Omnipotence has wak’d so long:  
Has wak’d, and work’d, for ages; from the birth  
Of Nature to this unbelieving hour.

In this small province of his vast domain  
(All nature bow, while I pronounce his name!)  
What has God done, and not for this sole end,  
To rescue souls from death? The soul’s high price  
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.

The foul's high price is the creation's key,  
 Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays  
 The genuine cause of ev'ry deed divine :  
 That is the chain of ages, which maintains  
 Their obvious correspondence, and unites  
 Most distant periods in one blest design :  
 That is the mighty hinge, on which have turn'd  
 All revolutions, whether we regard  
 The nat'ral, civil, or religious world ;  
 The former two, but servants to the third :  
 To that their duty done, they both expire,  
 Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown'd ;  
 And angels ask, " Where once they shone so fair ?"

To lift us from this abject, to sublime ;  
 This flux to permanent ; this dark to day ;  
 This foul, to pure ; this turbid, to serene ;  
 This mean, to mighty !—for this glorious end  
 Th' ALMIGHTY, rising, his long Sabbath broke ;  
 The world was made ; was ruin'd ; was restor'd ;  
 Laws from the skies were publish'd ; were repeal'd ;  
 On earth kings, kingdoms, rose ; kings, kingdoms, fell ;  
 Fam'd sages lighted up the Pagan world ;  
 Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance  
 Thro' distant age ; saints travell'd ; martyrs bled ;  
 By wonders, sacred Nature stood controul'd ;  
 The living were translated ; dead were rais'd ;  
 Angels, and more than angels, came from heav'n ;  
 And, oh ! for this, descended lower still ;  
 Guilt was hell's gloom ; astonish'd at his guest,  
 For one short moment Lucifer ador'd :  
 Lorenzo ! and wilt thou do less ?—for this,  
 That hallow'd page, fools scoff at, was inspir'd,  
 Of all these truths thrice venerable code !  
 Deists ! perform your quarantine ; and then  
 Fall prostrate, ere you touch it, lest you die.  
 Nor less intensely bent infernal powers  
 To mar, than those of light, this end to gain.  
 O what a scene is here !—Lorenzo ! wake ;

NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 177

Rise to the thought; exert, expand thy soul  
 To take the vast idea: it denies  
 All else the name of great. Two warring worlds!  
 Not Europe against Afric; warring worlds,  
 Of more than mortal! mounted on the wing!  
 On ardent wings of energy and zeal,  
 High-hov'ring o'er this little brand of strife!  
 This sublunary ball—But strife, for what?  
 In their own cause conflicting? no, in thine,  
 In man's. His single int'rest blows the flame;  
 His the sole stake; his fate the trumpet sounds,  
 Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!  
 Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms!  
 Force force opposing, till the waves run high,  
 And tempest Nature's universal sphere.  
 Such opposites eternal, stedfast, stern,  
 Such foes implacable are good and ill; [them.  
 Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between  
 Think not this fiction, "There was war in heaven."  
 From heav'n's high crystal mountain, where it hung,  
 Th' ALMIGHTY's outstretch'd arm took down his  
 And shot his indignation at the deep; [bow,  
 Re-thunder'd hell, and darted all her fires.—  
 And seems the stake of little moment still?  
 And slumbers man, who singly caus'd the storm?  
 He sleeps.—And art thou shock'd at mysteries?  
 The greatest, thou. How dreadful to reflect,  
 What ardor, care, and counsel, mortals cause  
 In breasts divine! how little in their own!  
 Where-e'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me!  
 How happily this wond'rous view supports  
 My former argument! how strongly strikes  
 Immortal life's full demonstration, here!  
 Why this exertion? why this strange regard  
 From heav'n's Omnipotent indulg'd to man?—  
 Because, in man, the glorious, dreadful pow'r,  
 Extremely to be pain'd, or bless'd for ever.  
 Duration gives importance; swells the price.

An angel, if a creature of a day,  
 What would he be? a trifle of no weight;  
 Or stand, or fall; no matter which; he's gone.  
 Because IMMORTAL, therefore is indulg'd  
 This strange regard of deities to dust:  
 Hence heaven looks down on earth with all her eyes:  
 Hence, the soul's mighty moment in her sight:  
 Hence, ev'ry soul has partisans above,  
 And ev'ry thought a critic in the skies:  
 Hence, clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,  
 And ev'ry guard a passion for his charge:  
 Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine  
 Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels hid.  
 Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,  
 And Providence came forth to meet mankind:  
 In various modes of emphasis, and awe,  
 He spake his will, and trembling Nature heard;  
 He spoke it loud, in thunder, and in storm.  
 Witness, thou Sinai! whose cloud-cover'd height,  
 And shaken basis, own'd the present God:  
 Witness, ye billows! whose returning tide,  
 Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,  
 Swept Egypt, and her menaces, to hell:  
 Witness, ye flames! th' Assyrian tyrant blew  
 To sevenfold rage, as impotent, as strong:  
 And thou, earth! witness, whose expanding jaws  
 Clos'd o'er \* Presumption's sacrilegious sons:  
 Has not each element, in turn, subscrib'd  
 The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wife?  
 Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove  
 To strike this truth thro' adamant man;  
 If not all adamant, Lorenzo! hear;  
 All is delusion, Nature is wrapt up  
 In tenfold night, from Reason's keenest eye;  
 There's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end,  
 In all beneath the sun, in all above,  
 (As far as man can penetrate) or heav'n,  
 Korah, &c.

# NIGT THE SEVENTH. 179

Is an immense, inestimable prize;  
Or all is nothing, or that prize is all——  
And shall each toy be still a match for heav'n?  
And full equivalent for groans below?  
Who would not give a trifle to prevent  
What he would give a thousand worlds to cure?

Lorenzo! thou hast seen (if thine to see)  
All nature, and her God (by nature's course,  
And nature's course controul'd) declare for me:  
The skies above proclaim "immortal man!"  
And, "man immortal!" all below resounds.  
The world's a system of theology,  
Read by the greatest strangers to the schools;  
If honest, learn'd; and sages o'er a plough.  
Is not, Lorenzo! then, impos'd on thee  
This hard alternative; or, to renounce  
Thy reason, and thy sense; or, to believe?  
What then is unbelief? 'Tis an exploit,  
A strenuous enterprize; to gain it, man  
Must burst thro' ev'ry bar of common sense,  
Of common shame, magnanimously wrong;  
And what rewards the sturdy combatant?  
His prize, repentance; infamy, his crown.

But wherefore infamy?——For want of faith,  
Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides;  
There's nothing to support him in the right.  
Faith in the future wanting, is, at least  
In embryo, ev'ry weakness, ev'ry guilt;  
And strong temptation ripens it to birth.  
If this life's gain invites him to the deed,  
Why not his country sold, his father slain?  
'Tis virtue to pursue our good supreme;  
And his supreme, his only good is here.  
Ambition, av'rice, by the wise disdain'd,  
Is perfect wisdom, while mankind are fools,  
And think a turf, or tomb-stone, covers all;  
These find emolument, and provide for sense  
A richer pasture, and a larger range;



And sense, by right divine, ascends the throne,  
 When virtue's prize and prospect are no more;  
 Virtue no more we think the will of Heav'n.  
 Would Heav'n quite beggar virtue, if belov'd?

"Has virtue charms?"—I grant her heavenly fair;  
 But if unportion'd, all will int'rest wed;  
 Tho' that our admiration, this our choice.  
 The virtues grow on immortality;  
 That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.  
 A Deity believ'd, will nought avail;  
 Rewards and punishments make God ador'd;  
 And hopes and fears give conscience all her pow'r.  
 As in the dying parent dies the child,  
 Virtue with immortality expires.

Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,  
 Whate'er his boast, has told me he's a knave.  
 His duty 'tis to love himself alone;  
 Nor care tho' mankind perish, if he smiles.  
 Who thinks ere long the man shall wholly die,  
 Is dead already; nought but brute survives.

And are there such?—Such candidates there are  
 For more than death; for utter loss of being;  
 Being, the basis of the Deity!  
 Ask you the cause?—The cause they will not tell;  
 Nor need they: Oh, the forceries of sense!  
 They work this transformation on the soul,  
 Dismount her like the serpent at the fall.  
 Dismount her from her native wing (which soar'd  
 Ere-while ethereal heights) and throw her down,  
 To lick the dust, and crawl in such a thought.

Is it in words to paint you? O ye fall'n!  
 Fall'n from the wings of reason, and of hope!  
 Erect in stature, prone in appetite!  
 Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain!  
 Lovers of argument, averse to sense!  
 Boasters of liberty, fast bound in chains!  
 Lords of the wide creation, and the shame!  
 More senseless than th' irrationals you scorn!

More base than those you rule! than those you pity  
 Far more undone! O ye most infamous  
 Of beings, from superior dignity!  
 Deepest in woe, from means of boundless bliss!  
 Ye curst, by blessings infinite! because  
 Most highly favour'd, most profoundly lost!  
 Ye motley mafs of contradiction strong!  
 And are you, too, convinc'd, your souls fly off  
 In exhalation soft, and die in air,  
 From the full flood of evidence against you?  
 In the coarse drudgeries, and sinks of sense,  
 Your souls have quite worn out the make of heav'n,  
 By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own:  
 But tho' you can deform, you can't destroy;  
 To curse, not uncreate, is all your pow'r.

Lorenzo! this black brotherhood renounce;  
 Renounce St Evremont, and read St Paul,  
 Ere rapt by miracle, by reason wing'd,  
 His mounting mind made long abode in heav'n.  
 This is freethinking, unconfin'd to parts;  
 To send the soul, on curious travel bent,  
 Thro' all the provinces of human thought;  
 To dart her flight thro' the whole sphere of man;  
 Of this vast universe to make the tour;  
 In each recess of space and time, at home;  
 Familiar with their wonders; diving deep;  
 And, like a prince of boundless int'rests there,  
 Still most ambitious of the most remote;  
 To look on truth unbroken, and entire;  
 Truth in the system, the full orb; where truths  
 By truths enlighten'd, and sustain'd, afford  
 An arch-like, strong foundation, to support  
 Th' incumbent weight of absolute, complete  
 Conviction: here, the more we press, we stand  
 More firm; who most examine, most believe.  
 Parts, like half sentences, confound; the whole  
 Conveys the sense, and GOD is understood;  
 Who not in fragments writes to human race:

## 182 THE COMPLAINT:

Read his whole volume, sceptic! then reply.

This, this, is thinking-free, a thought that grasps  
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.

Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene :

What are earth's kingdoms to yon boundless orbs,  
Of human souls, one day, the destin'd range?

And what yon boundless orbs, to godlike man?

Those num'rous worlds that throng the firmament,

And ask more space in heav'n, can rowl at large

In man's capacious thought, and still leave room

For ample orbs; for new creations, there.

Can such a soul contract itself, to gripe

A point of no dimension, of no weight?

It can; it does: the world is such a point,

And, of that point, how small a part enslaves!

How small a part——of nothing, shall I say?

Why not?—friends, our chief treasure! how they drop!

Lucia, Narcissa fair, Philander, gone!

The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has op'd

A triple mouth; and, in an awful voice,

Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.

How the world falls to pieces round about us,

And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!

What says this transportation of my friends?

It bids me love the place where now they dwell,

And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.

Eternity's vast ocean lyes before thee;

There, there, Lorenzo! thy Clarissa fails.

Give thy mind sea-room; keep it wide of earth,

That rock of souls immortal; cut thy cord;

Weigh anchor; spread thy sails; call ev'ry wind;

Eye thy great pole-star; make the land of life.

Two kinds of life has double-natur'd man,

And two of death; the last far more severe.

Life animal is nurtur'd by the sun,

Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams.

Life rational subsists on higher food,

Triumphant in his beams, who made the day.

When we leave that sun, and are left by this,  
 (The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt),  
 'Tis utter darkness; strictly double death.  
 We sink by no judicial stroke of Heav'n,  
 But Nature's course; as sure as plumbets fall.  
 Since GOD, or man, must alter, ere they meet,  
 (For light and darkness blend not in one sphere)  
 'Tis manifest, Lorenzo! who must change.

If then that double death should prove thy lot,  
 Blame not the bowels of the DEITY;  
 Man shall be blest'd, as far as man permits.  
 Not man alone, all rationals, Heav'n arms  
 With an illustrious, but tremendous pow'r  
 To counteract its own most gracious ends;  
 And this, of strict necessity, not choice:  
 That pow'r deny'd, men, angels, were no more  
 But passive engines, void of praise, or blame.  
 A nature rational implies the pow'r  
 Of being blest'd, or wretched, as we please;  
 Else idle Reason would have nought to do;  
 And he that would be barr'd capacity  
 Of pain, courts incapacity of bliss.  
 Heav'n wills our happiness, allows our doom;  
 Invites us ardently, but not compells:  
 Heav'n but persuades, almighty man decrees;  
 Man is the maker of immortal fates.  
 Man falls by man, if finally he falls;  
 And fall he must, who learns from Death alone  
 The dreadful secret—that he lives for ever.

Why this to thee? thee yet, perhaps, in doubt  
 Of second life? But wherefore doubtful still?  
 Eternal life is Nature's ardent wish;  
 What ardently we wish, we soon believe:  
 Thy tardy faith declares that wish destroy'd:  
 What has destroy'd it?—shall I tell thee what?  
 When fear'd the future, 'tis no longer wish'd;  
 And, when unwish'd, we strive to disbelieve.  
 "Thus infidelity our guilt betrays."

## 184 THE COMPLAINT:

Nor that the sole detection: blush, Lorenzo!  
 Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.  
 The future fear'd?—An Infidel, and fear?  
 Fear what? a dream? a fable?—How thy dread,  
 Unwilling evidence, and therefore strong,  
 Affords my cause an undesign'd support!  
 How Disbelief affirms, what it denies!  
 "It, unawares, asserts immortal life."—  
 Surprising! Infidelity turns out  
 A creed, and a confession of our sins:  
 Apostates, thus, are orthodox divines.  
 Lorenzo! with Lorenzo clash no more!  
 Nor longer a transparent vizar wear.  
 Think'st thou, RELIGION only has her mask?  
 Our Infidels are Satan's hypocrites,  
 Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, fail.  
 When visited by thought, (thought will intrude),  
 Like him they serve, they tremble, and believe.  
 Is there hypocrisy so foul as this?  
 So fatal to the welfare of the world?  
 What detestation, what contempt, their due?  
 And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape  
 That Christian candour they strive hard to scorn.  
 If not for that asylum, they might find  
 A hell on earth; nor 'scape a worse below.

With insolence, and impotence of thought,  
 Instead of racking fancy, to refute,  
 Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.—  
 But shall I dare confess the dire result?  
 Can thy proud reason brook so black a brand?  
 From purer manners, to sublimer faith,  
 Is Nature's unavoidable ascent;  
 An honest deist, where the gospel shines,  
 Matur'd to nobler, in the Christian ends.  
 When that blest'd change arrives, ev'n cast aside  
 This song superfluous; life immortal strikes  
 Conviction, in a flood of light divine.  
 A Christian dwells, like Uriel \*, in the sun;

\* Milton.



# NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 185

Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight;  
And ardent hope anticipates the skies.  
Of that bright sun, Lorenzo! scale the sphere;  
'Tis easy; it invites thee; it descends  
From heav'n, to woo, and waft thee whence it came:  
Read, and revere, the sacred page; a page  
Where triumphs immortality; a page  
Which not the whole creation could produce;  
Which not the conflagration shall destroy;  
'Tis printed in the mind of gods for ever,  
In Nature's ruins not one letter lost.

In proud disdain of what ev'n gods adore,  
Dost smile?—Poor wretch! thy guardian-angel weeps.  
Angels, and men, assent to what I sing;  
Wits smile, and thank me for my midnight dream.  
How vicious hearts fume phrensy to the brain!  
Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame;  
Pert infidelity is wit's cockade,  
To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,  
By loss of being, dreadfully secure.  
Lorenzo! if thy doctrine wins the day,  
And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field;  
If this is all, if earth a final scene,  
Take heed; stand fast; be sure to be a knave;  
A knave in grain! ne'er deviate to the right:  
Shouldst thou be good—how infinite thy loss!  
Guilt only makes annihilation gain.  
Bless'd scheme! which life deprives of comfort, death  
Of hope; and which VICE only recommends.  
If so; where, Infidels! your bait thrown out  
To catch weak converts? where your lofty boast  
Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man?  
ANNIHILATION, I confess, in these.

What can reclaim you? dare I hope profound  
Philosophers the converts of a song?  
Yet know, its title \* flatters you, not me.  
Yours be the praise to make my title good;

\* The Infidel Reclaim'd.

## 186 THE COMPLAINT:

Mine to bless Heav'n, and triumph in your praise.  
 But since so pestilential your disease,  
 Though sov'reign is the med'cine I prescribe,  
 As yet I'll neither triumph nor despair:  
 But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake  
 Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise:  
 For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,  
 Ere wish (and wish in vain!) that souls could die?  
 What ne'er can die, oh! grant to live; and crown  
 The wish, and aim, and labour, of the skies;  
 Increase, and enter on the joys of heav'n:  
 Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,  
 Receive an *imprimatur* from above,  
 While angels shout—*An Infidel reclaim'd!*

To close, Lorenzo! spite of all my pains,  
 Still seems it strange, that thou shouldst live for ever!  
 Is it less strange, that thou shouldst live at all?  
 This is a miracle; and that no more.  
 Who gave beginning, can exclude an end.  
 Deny thou art; then, doubt if thou shalt be.  
 A miracle with miracles inclos'd  
 Is man: and starts his faith at what is strange?  
 What less than wonders from the Wonderful,  
 What less than miracles from GOD, can flow?  
 Admit a GOD—that mystery supreme!  
 That Cause uncaus'd! all other wonders cease;  
 Nothing is marvellous for him to do:  
 Deny him—all is mystery besides;  
 Millions of mysteries! each darker far,  
 Than that thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun.  
 If weak thy faith, why chuse the harder side?  
 We nothing know, but what is marvellous;  
 Yet what is marvellous, we can't believe.  
 So weak our reason, and so great our GOD,  
 What most surprises in the sacred page,  
 Yet full as strange, or stranger must be true.  
 Faith is not reason's labour, but repose.

To faith, and virtue, why so backward, man?

NIGHT THE SEVENTH. 187

From hence :—The present strongly strikes us all ;  
 The future, faintly: can we, then, be men?  
 If men, Lorenzo! the reverse is right.  
 Reason is man's peculiar ; sense, the brute's.  
 The present is the scanty realm of Sense;  
 The future, Reason's empire unconfin'd ;  
 On that, expending all her godlike pow'r,  
 She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs, there;  
 There, builds her blessings; there, expects her praise;  
 And nothing asks of fortune, or of men.  
 And what is Reason ? Be she thus defin'd ;  
 Reason is upright stature in the soul.  
 Oh! be a man ; and strive to be a god.

“ For what? (thou say'st:) to damp the joys of life?”  
 No ; to give heart and substance to thy joys.  
 That tyrant, Hope ; mark, how she domineers:  
 She bids us quit realities for dreams ;  
 Safety and peace, for hazard and alarm ;  
 That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the soul,  
 She bids ambition quit its taken prize,  
 Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it fits,  
 Tho' bearing crowns, to spring at distant game;  
 And plunge in toils, and dangers—for repose.  
 If hope precarious, and of things, when gain'd,  
 Of little moment, and as little stay,  
 Can sweeten toils and dangers into joy ;  
 What then, that hope, which nothing can defeat,  
 Our leave unask'd ? rich hope of boundless bliss!  
 Bliss, past man's pow'r to paint it ; time's to close!

This hope is earth's most estimable prize ;  
 This is man's portion, while no more than man :  
 Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here ;  
 Passions of prouder name befriend us less.  
 Joy has her tears, and Transport has her death:  
 Hope, like a cordial, innocent, tho' strong,  
 Man's heart at once inspirits and serenes,  
 Nor make him pay his wisdom for his joys;  
 'Tis all our present state can safely bear,

188 THE COMPLAINT:

Health to the frame, and vigour to the mind!  
A joy attemper'd! a chastis'd delight!  
Like the fair summer-ev'ning, mild, and sweet!  
'Tis man's full cup; his paradise below!

A blest'd Hereafter, then, or hop'd, or gain'd,  
Is all;—our whole of happiness: full proof,  
I chose no trivial or inglorious theme.  
And know, ye foes to song! (well-meaning men,  
Tho' quite forgotten half \* your Bible's praise!)  
Important truths, in spite of verse, may please:  
Grave minds you praise; nor can you praise too much:  
If there is weight in an ETERNITY,  
Let the grave listen;—and be graver still.

\* The poetical parts of it.

END of the THIRD VOLUME.